

BV 638 .H6 1931
Hooker, Elizabeth R. b.
1872.
Hinterlands of the church

Institute of Social and Religious Research

HINTERLANDS
OF THE CHURCH

ELIZABETH R. HOOKER

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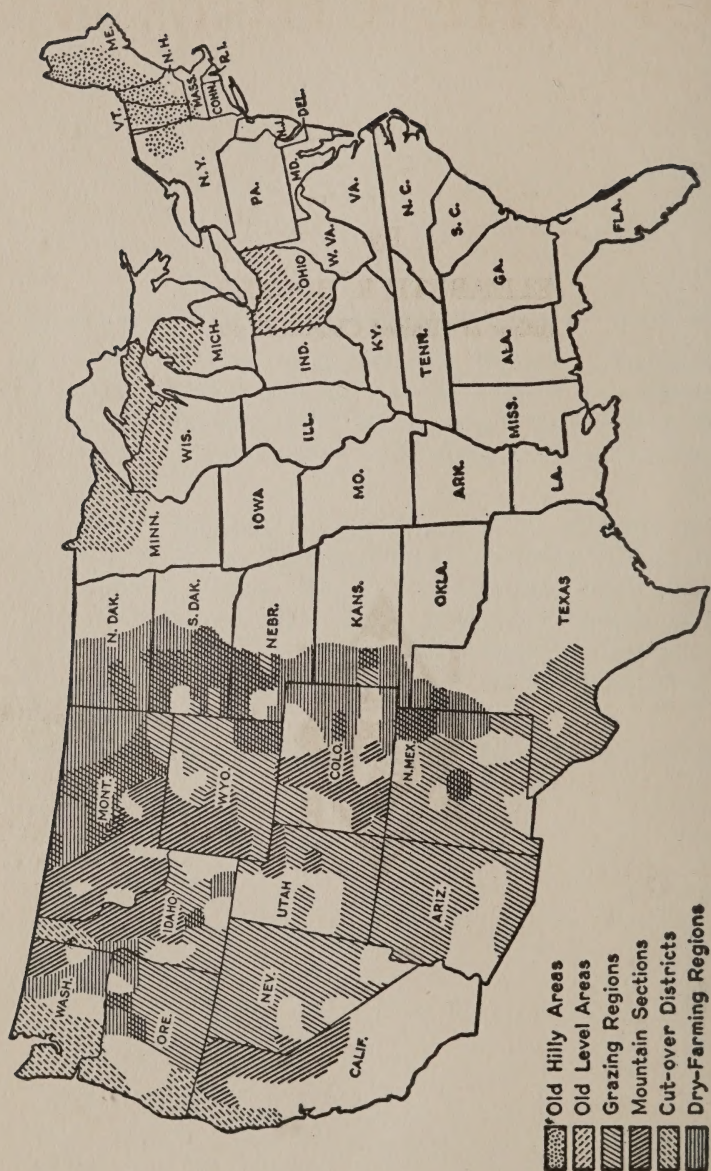
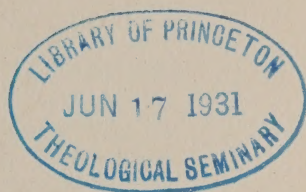


DIAGRAM I

Impressionistic Map of six kinds of territory with few church-members

HINTERLANDS OF THE CHURCH



By ✓

ELIZABETH R. HOOKER

Author of "United Churches", etc.



NEW YORK
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS RESEARCH

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INTRODUCTION

Through a study begun in 1928, the Institute of Social and Religious Research investigated six kinds of territory in the United States where the rural churches were comparatively ineffective. The test applied in measuring church effectiveness consisted of the proportion of the population enrolled in the membership of local churches.

This was believed to be the most significant test of the few that were practicable. The proportion of the inhabitants belonging to the churches of any area was considered a fair indication of the ability of the churches to enlist the people of their communities.

Moreover, the method of appraisal proposed was practicable; since church-membership is reported for all counties in the United States by the *Census of Religious Bodies*. Ratios of these county figures for church-membership in 1926 to estimated population in the same year were used as a means of measuring the comparative effectiveness of the churches.

Previous studies by the Institute and other survey agencies had shown that there is a comparatively low proportion of church-members in rural territory. And it was known that among rural areas especially low proportions are to be found not only in certain small districts in the hilly regions of the Northeastern Highlands and in the level regions of the older Middle West, but also in districts of county-wide extent in the more recently developed parts of the United States.

For whole counties, the proportion of the people in the churches could be tested by means of the data of the Religious Census; but this could not be done where the poorly enlisted districts were smaller than counties. It was therefore necessary to apply the test of church effectiveness in different ways in the older and in the newer areas. In the older areas it was applied through field surveys of representative districts.¹ In the newer regions, it was done statistically for whole counties. Though the states of the older Middle West were included in the field, for this part of the country the test was not expected to give, and did not give,

¹ A fuller explanation of the test and of the limitation of the field to which it was applied is given in Appendix I.

any indication as to whether or not poorly enlisted districts were present within the counties.

To provide a basis of comparison, the test was first applied to the rural counties, taken collectively, of each of thirty-eight states which together included nearly 95 per cent. of the area of the United States, and in 1920 contained six-sevenths of the rural population. In Diagram II this territory is shaded. It will be

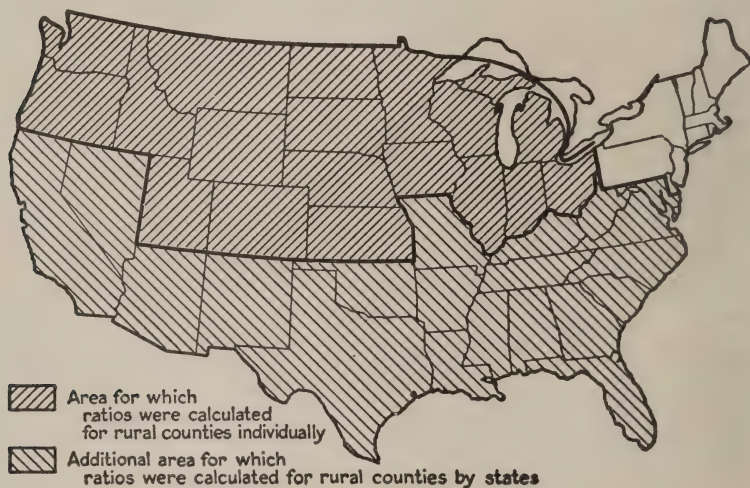


DIAGRAM II

Area covered by inquiry into proportion of rural population enrolled in church-membership

seen to exclude only the ten small states in the northeastern corner of the country, within which lie the Northeastern Highlands. In the eighteen states shaded with diagonal lines running northeast and southwest, which form a stretch of contiguous territory in the Middle West and Far West constituting four-ninths of the area of the whole country and containing about one-third of the rural population, the same test was applied to 558 rural counties taken singly.

The use of the test brought to light several facts bearing on the selection of areas for investigation. The rural territory of the seven states covered in the Mountain and Pacific divisions was found to contrast with that of the Middle West in three significant respects. First, church-members in the Far West averaged considerably fewer in relation to number of inhabitants, as is shown by Diagram III. Secondly, the proportion of the area in which fewer than one-fifth of the people belonged to the churches was very much larger. Finally, the proportions of

church-members had not risen since 1916, although they had risen in nine of the ten middle-western states covered. It was therefore clear that some, at least, of the kinds of territory to be investigated must lie in the comparatively new areas of the Far West.

Further use of the test resulted in the identification of four kinds of new territory, largely in the Far West, where the three

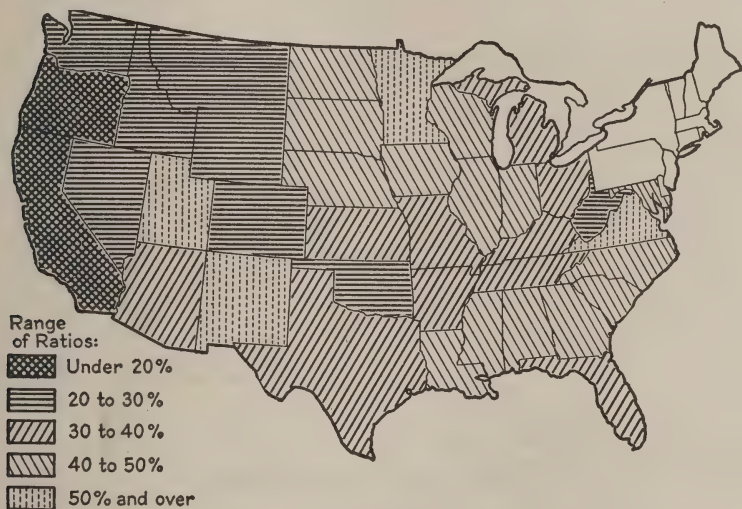


DIAGRAM III

Outline Map of the United States, showing range of proportions of church-members in population of rural counties, by states

tendencies general in that part of the United States exist in an extreme degree. These are Grazing country, Mountain sections, Dry-farming regions and Cut-over districts. The first three are in the Far West and along the western edge of the West North Central Division. Of the Cut-over regions included in the investigation, one is situated in the Pacific Northwest, the other about the Great Lakes. Only one of the eight Protestant regions of these four types of area had as many as one-third of the people in the church-membership, and most of these regions had considerably less than one-third. For the United States as a whole the proportion was 47.8 per cent. The four kinds of territory, counting only districts occupying whole counties, cover three-eighths of the area of the United States and had, in 1920, a rural population of three and one-third millions.

The six kinds of territory chosen for investigation included two kinds in the older parts of the United States, here called *Old*

Hilly areas and *Old Level areas*, and four kinds of new territory, which are referred to in this study as *Grazing country*, *Mountain sections*, *Cut-over districts*, and *Dry-farming regions*.

These six kinds of territory are not the only kinds that have small proportions of people in the churches; but they do constitute the kinds of poorly enlisted area that are of widest extent.

Intensive field surveys of the conditions affecting the rural church were made in two or three entire counties typical of each of the six different kinds of areas. Each of these kinds of territory was also studied through statistics drawn from the United States Census and other sources, covering larger samples of the various types. Much light was also obtained through interviews with officials of divisions of agricultural extension, educators and denominational executives, to each of whom grateful acknowledgment of their assistance is hereby extended. In this connection, the stimulating advice and coöperation of a number of persons associated with the Comprehensive Survey of Vermont, including the Director, Dr. H. C. Taylor, and members of the Committee on Religious Forces, deserve particular recognition and thanks. Officials of the Ohio Council of Churches were also very helpful.

In the body of the book the conclusions reached have been expressed in untechnical language and through maps and charts. Statistical findings and other data on which the more important conclusions are based are presented in several appendices.

In calculating proportions of population enlisted in churches, members of all faiths were taken into account. In discussing church conditions and problems, however, the point of view has been Protestant. The aim has been to furnish to all responsible for the conduct of the Protestant church enterprise, whether as officials, ministers, lay workers or contributors, information unmixed with advice about six kinds of territory where church-members are comparatively few in proportion to population. The information here offered concerns the location and extent of each kind of territory, the conditions that confront the churches, the general status of church work in 1928, the trend of degrees of enlistment since 1906, and certain remedies that are being applied in the hope of improving conditions.

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Chapter I

THE KINDS OF TERRITORY AND THE FINDINGS

Churches everywhere are profoundly affected by such unalterable factors as topography, rainfall, and determining facts of history.

TOPOGRAPHY

Near the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans, and roughly parallel to the coastline of the United States, are extended highlands; and between them lies a vast plain. In the Appalachian Highlands of the East, though mountain peaks are found, the inhabited area is largely a region of hills. The western highlands consist of two series of mountain chains, the Coast ranges and the considerably higher Rocky Mountains; the two series being connected by lofty plateaus. Here extensive inhabited districts are shut away among the mountains.

In the highlands and in the interior plain are five of the six kinds of territory of comparatively low church-membership covered by the present study. Among the Appalachian highlands lie the scattered valleys that constitute one kind, here called *Old Hilly areas*. Among the lofty western ranges are the areas here designated *Mountain sections*. The interior plain contains three more of the kinds of area studied. In the longer-settled eastern part are found country neighborhoods that characterize the type of area called here *Old Level areas*. In the western part, well beyond the Mississippi River, lies most of the Dry-farming area. Here, too, is situated some of the Grazing country, larger areas of which are found in the great plateaus between the two series of western mountains. The Cut-over lands, which constitute the sixth type of area, are found in sections of varied topography.

RAINFALL

From the three great bodies of water, the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans and the Gulf of Mexico, sea winds bring moisture to the land. When the lower reaches of the damp air brought by the winds strike the cold mountains near the eastern and the

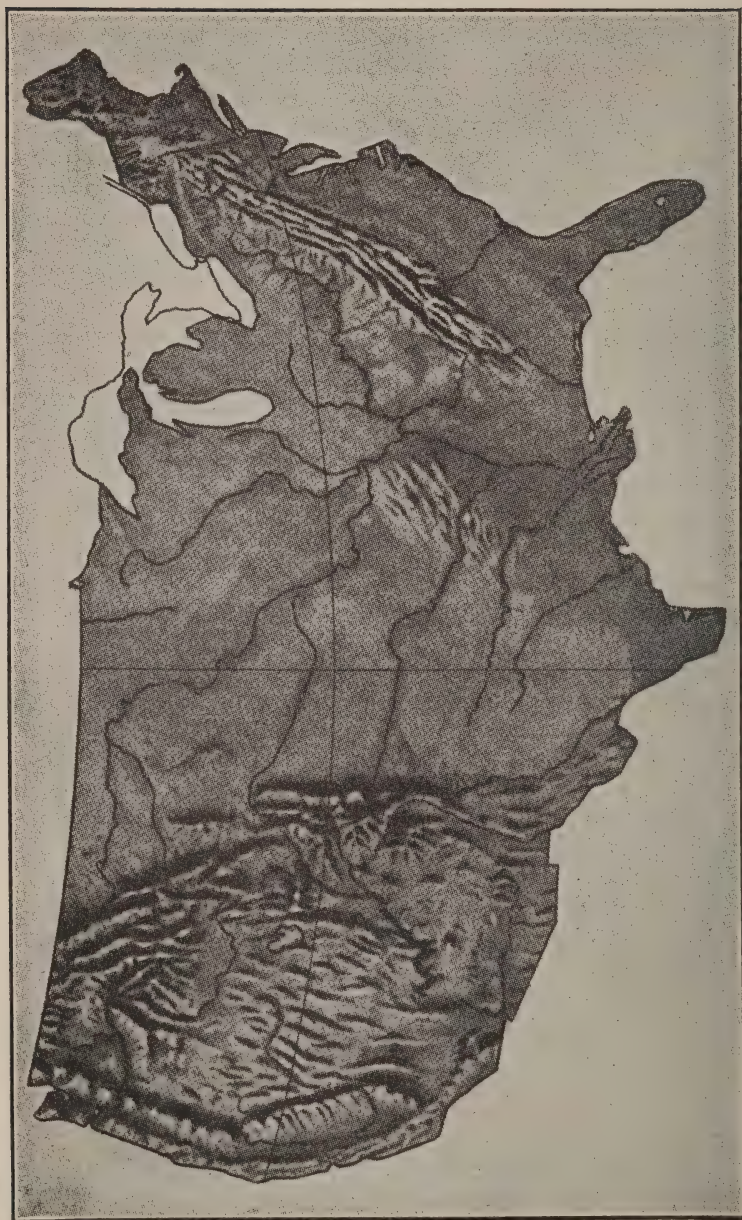


DIAGRAM IV

Relief Map of the United States. (Reproduction licensed. Base map copyrighted by Rand McNally and Company.)

western rims of the continent, they are chilled. Since the colder the air the less moisture it can hold, part of the water vapor in the air is condensed and falls as rain or snow upon the tops of the mountains and on their seaward slopes.

On the northern part of the western coast a great deal of rain falls, because the prevailing southwest winds come to this section from over the sea. The coast ranges take some of the water from the lower levels of the air. As the winds blow eastward, they presently reach the higher and colder Cascade and Sierra Mountains. Here they lose still more of their moisture. Continuing to blow eastward, they cross the Great Inland Basin. In this region they drop hardly any of their remaining moisture, for the summers here are very hot. Most of this area receives in the whole year less rain or its equivalent in snow than enough to cover the land, assuming it were flat, with ten inches of water. Large districts do not have enough precipitation to cover the land even to a depth of five inches. Now most forms of agriculture require from twenty to forty inches of precipitation. Therefore in this arid area crops are raised only in irrigated valleys and exceptionally moist patches. The arid region is very large, including the wide area between the mountains all the way from Canada to Mexico, and in fact extending over the boundaries into both these countries.

At the eastern edge of this arid land rise the lofty Rocky Mountains. Their summits reach higher layers of air than the mountains further west, and chill the air to a lower temperature. Therefore the higher western slopes of the Rocky Mountains receive considerable rain and snow, and from the mountains rivers carry away, both to the east and the west, abundant supplies of water.

To the lands close under the Rocky Mountains on the east, the winds from the Pacific can give no moisture; and these districts are very dry. In fact they are classed among "rain shadow" districts, a name applied to localities from which rain is excluded as light is excluded from a place that is in shadow. Farther eastward, where the Great Plains slope imperceptibly toward the Mississippi River, there is a little more moisture; but this comes from another source.

The moisture-laden air from the Gulf of Mexico is carried by the southwest winds of summer northeastward through the Mississippi valley as far as the Great Lakes and the Appalachian Mountains. On its way, fortunately, it does not come into contact with any transverse mountain ranges; but as the winds reach colder and colder regions, they drop moisture in showers

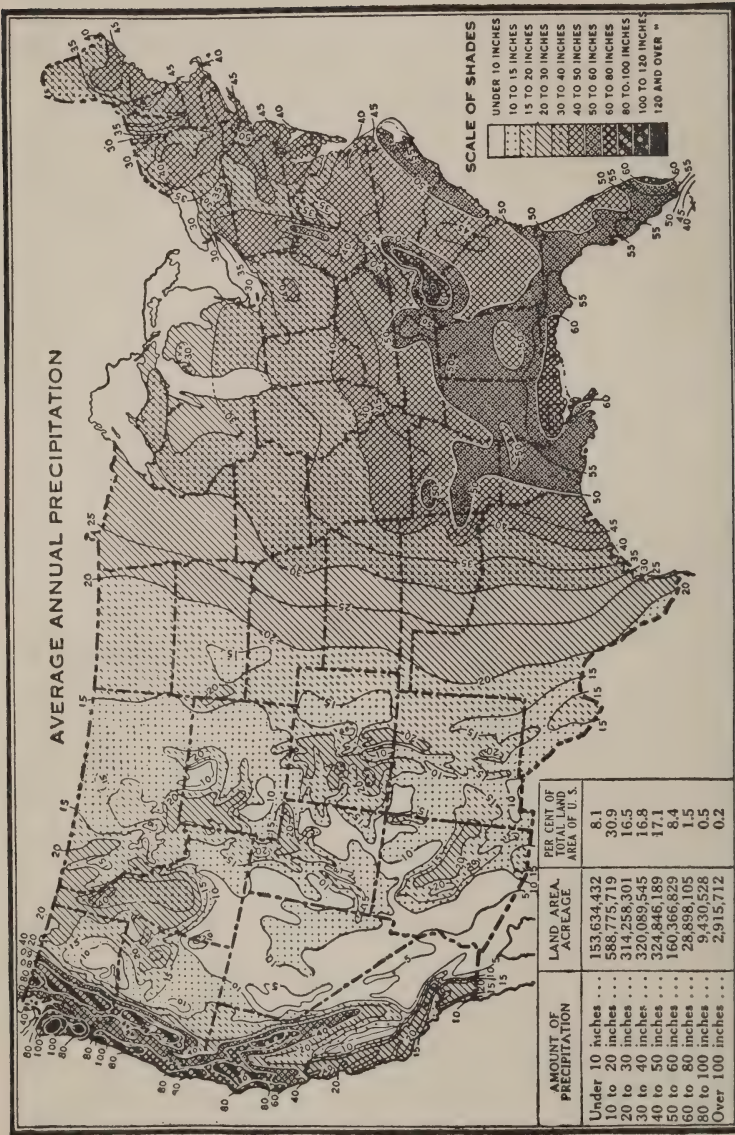


DIAGRAM V

Map of the United States showing average annual precipitation. (Used with the permission of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.)

and thunder-storms all the way along, watering the crops of this productive agricultural region. Thus the air becomes less and less moist; but though the amount precipitated, which is sixty inches in part of the area near the Gulf, gradually diminishes, it is at least thirty inches in northern Michigan. The country east of the Appalachians is well watered by winds from the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean.

The southwest winds from the Gulf, as a glance at the map will show, cannot carry moisture directly to the Great Plains. But here come into play the cyclonic storms, which form one of our chief climatic blessings. These great areas of low pressure draw the air into a wide vortex, the swirl moving in the northern hemisphere in the opposite direction to that of the hands of a watch. Through their means some of the moist air brought into the interior by the southwest winds is whirled around northward and then westward toward the Great Plains.

The amount of moisture thus carried westward decreases progressively; so that the zones of equal rainfall, instead of running east and west, as they do east of the Mississippi River, run north and south. Diagram VII shows approximately the line between the area where ordinary agriculture is possible, and the area where unusual methods must be used if crops are to be grown at all.

It is not a sharp line like a geographical boundary, but is what is called a transition line; that is, it stands for a rather indefinite and somewhat shifting band on either side of which contrasting conditions are found. It corresponds roughly over much of its course with the line of twenty-inch precipitation; but in the north lies farther west, since there the lower degree of evaporation makes the rain go farther. The line crosses the Dakotas, Nebraska, western Kansas, the panhandle of Oklahoma, and western Texas.

ORIGINAL STATE OF LANDS

When the earliest colonists came to settle in the New World, a large proportion of the humid areas was covered with forests and marshes. A dense growth of trees spread over the coastal plains of the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico, the mountains near the eastern coast, the whole region around the Great Lakes, and parts of the Central States to the south. The northern part of the Pacific Coast was covered by a still heavier growth of trees, many of them of great size. The several chains of mountains near the Pacific were also clad with luxuriant forests. A thinner growth of trees was found between certain elevations

on the western slopes of the Rocky Mountains. Forests also clothed other smaller areas, such as the Ozark Mountains of Missouri and Arkansas. All together, the forested lands are estimated to have covered 830 million acres,¹ which is equivalent to 45 per cent. of the whole area of what is now the United States.

Prairies, covered with long grass, and plains, where the grass was short, extended over much of the area between the eastern and southern forests and the Rocky Mountains. The area originally in grass is believed to have been about 670 million acres, thus constituting one-third the total present area of the United States.³

The arid region between the mountains was sparsely dotted then, as most of it is today, with various forms of desert vegetation. This territory is estimated to have been 400 million acres in extent, forming about one-fifth the area of the United States.²

The wide, undeveloped expanse which was later to become the United States held many kinds of potential wealth. Among them three are significant for the purposes of this study:

First, the agricultural resources, that is, the soil and the climatic and other conditions rendering possible the production of crops and domestic animals.

Secondly, the mineral wealth, largely hidden away underground and behind mountain barriers.

And, finally, the timber of the vast forests.

HISTORY

For a little more than 300 years the process of subduing and settling this domain and of developing its natural resources has been under way.

BEFORE THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

Jamestown, 1607; Plymouth, 1620—these two names and dates familiar to American school children remind us that the conquest of our domain began on the Atlantic coast and in the early decades of the seventeenth century. To clear away the forests and drain the swamps of the Atlantic coastal plain was a long and difficult task for the colonists; for they were few in number, their tools were primitive, and they were in constant danger of

¹ C. V. Piper and others, "Our Forage Resources," *Yearbook of Agriculture*, 1923, p. 378, under map.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

attacks from the Indians. In the century and a half before the Revolutionary War, which was about half the time that elapsed between the earliest settlement and 1928, the English colonists had tamed only the region between the ocean and the summits of the mountains. In this strip lay all the original thirteen states which combined shortly before 1790 as the United States, with Maine, then part of Massachusetts, and Vermont, which joined the Union in 1791. Diagram VI, in which the original thirteen

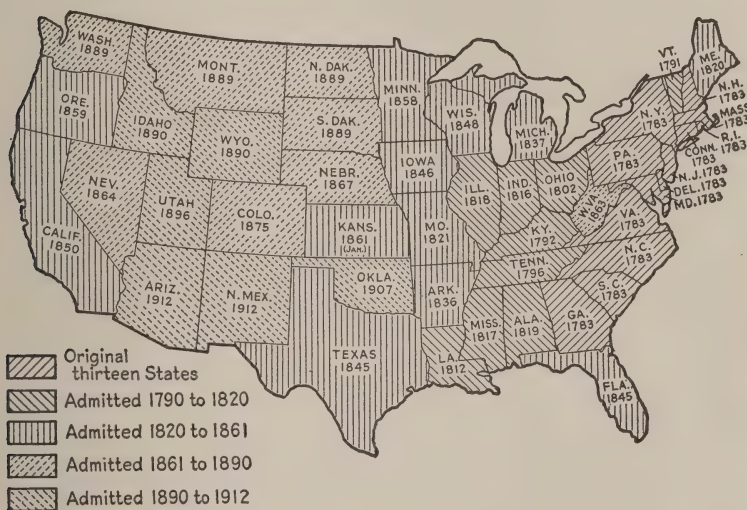


DIAGRAM VI

Outline Map of the United States showing, by periods, states admitted to the Union

states are marked with parallel lines running northeast and southwest, shows graphically how narrow a strip had been effectually colonized before 1790. At the end of half the years since the coming of the Mayflower, little more than a tenth of the present area of the country was within organized states. The French, to be sure, approaching the continent by way of the Gulf of Mexico, had started a colony near the mouth of the Mississippi River; and Spaniards, arriving on the Pacific Coast, had made settlements in the Southwest, with grazing as their chief means of livelihood. But the settlers in both these regions were few, and neither area then belonged to the United States.

A comparison of Diagram VI with the relief map of the United States on page 2 makes vivid to the eye the fact that almost all the states that were first to be settled are overlapped

by the Appalachian Highlands, within which, indeed, falls the whole of Vermont. The Old Hilly areas, accordingly, parts of which constitute the oldest of the six kinds of territory covered by the study, had their early development before the Fourth of July, 1776, the well-known date of the Declaration of Independence.

BETWEEN THE REVOLUTION AND 1820

From this earliest settled area, groups of families in wagons pushed westward, some through the Mohawk Valley in central New York and others by way of the Great Valley from south-eastern Pennsylvania on to southwestern Virginia and thence through the Cumberland Gap. They went to colonize the broad regions between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River. This area was sufficiently settled by 1820 so that seven of its present states, marked with diagonal lines running northwest and southeast on Diagram VI, had been received into the Union. But while Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, which contained much prairie land, had been admitted, Michigan and Wisconsin, where settlement entailed the clearing of dense forests, had not become sufficiently developed to become states.

Those among the new states that lay north of the Ohio River had for the most part a very level surface. This flat country, with additional territory of the same character farther west, which was developed during the succeeding period, formed the region called in this book Old Level areas.

Many of the pioneers who settled the states between the eastern highlands and the Mississippi River went from the valleys of the Old Hilly areas. Their departure had effects upon the older country that will be described in the detailed study of that kind of territory.

About midway of this period the Louisiana Purchase doubled the area belonging to the United States, making it extend in the northwest as far as the Rocky Mountains. The state of Louisiana, which had an accessible position on the Gulf of Mexico, was the only state lying west of the Mississippi River that was admitted to the Union before 1820.

BETWEEN 1820 AND THE CIVIL WAR

During the years between 1820 and the Civil War the opening of the Erie Canal with the development of steamboat lines on the Great Lakes facilitated travel from New England and New York to Michigan and the states beyond.

In this period, too, the first railway was built in this country; and before the end of the forty-odd years a good many miles of railroad had been built in the eastern states. Canals and railroads carried many settlers, their goods and their supplies, toward the lands of promise beyond the Mississippi River.

Before 1861 not only Michigan and Wisconsin but the row of states just west of the Mississippi had been received into the Union. Kansas, even farther west, had also been settled for well-known reasons connected with the issue of slavery, and became a state in January, 1861. In Diagram VI these states are indicated by vertical lines.

The new means of transportation facilitated the departure for the West of many residents of the old areas both hilly and level. They also afforded, especially to the Old Level areas, new opportunities of marketing produce. This change greatly favored the development of the Old Level areas; but at the same time it brought serious competition to the less favorably situated farmers of the Old Hilly areas. In consequence the church situation in these areas was affected in important ways.

During this same eventful epoch, much territory was added to the United States through treaty and purchase, so that by 1861 the boundaries of the continental United States had become what they are today. Before the Civil War, Texas and Florida, on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico, and Oregon and California, on the Pacific, were organized out of the new territory.

The new lands were occupied partly by settlers from the older states and partly by immigrants from Europe. Between 1820 and 1861, the tide of immigration greatly increased. During the decade just before the Civil War eighteen times as many immigrants entered the United States as had arrived during the first decade of the period.

A change came about also in the racial origins of the newcomers. Of those entering the country between 1820 and 1830, three-fourths were of races that spoke English. Later in the period a large proportion of the immigrants came to be Germans and Scandinavians. Many immigrants of both the last two racial origins settled on farms in the Old Level areas.

This same period saw the discovery of gold in California in 1848, and the consequent rush of gold-seekers across the Plains and around Cape Horn. Later in this period, and during the one that followed, gold and other metals were found in mountain districts of other states. The districts among the mountains, which were hard to reach and difficult to cultivate, were settled much earlier because of these discoveries than they would other-

wise have been; and as there were at the time no transcontinental railroads, the transportation of supplies and of produce was both difficult and costly. Many of these districts declined after being despoiled of their mineral wealth. Thus began the history of the Mountain sections.

BETWEEN THE CIVIL WAR AND 1890

At the beginning of the Civil War, then, organized states occupied the eastern part of the country as far west as the Red and Missouri rivers, and stretched along the Gulf coast and part of the shore of the Pacific Ocean. The vast area between was still the haunt of Indians and buffalos.

The rapid development of the interior of the Far West in the years between the Civil War and 1890 was furthered by two new factors. One of these was a change of policy on the part of the United States government as to the method of distributing the public domain. The Homestead Act of 1862 offered settlers for the first time an opportunity to obtain land without paying money for it. Through grants of land to railways, moreover, large amounts of land were put into the hands of those whose interest it was to see that it was settled and developed.

The other important factor in the rapid development of the interior was the construction of railways. The Union Pacific Railroad was completed in 1869, and other transcontinental railways were built not long afterwards. The construction of branch lines swiftly followed. Settlement in some sections became very rapid. In Dakota, for example, districts that had but a few settlers in May, became populous counties before Christmas.

The railroads made possible the shipping of live stock. Grazing, which had been begun long before by the Spanish settlers in the Southwest, spread all over the West, so that by 1890 the whole of the open range was being grazed. The stock raised at first consisted chiefly of cattle; but later sheep grew to be more important, and gradually preëmpted the drier and more barren grazing lands.

Where homesteads were taken up and fences were built, the stockmen were gradually pushed back upon the areas where the less remunerative work of grazing was the only possible form of agriculture. In this way Grazing country came to occupy most of the area of the Intermountain Plateaus and the drier and rougher portions of the Great Plains.

The development of the Grazing country, together with the freight service of the transcontinental railroads, intensified the competition under which the farmers of the Old Hilly areas had

long been suffering. The number of farmers in this area was reduced and the attention of those surviving came to be devoted chiefly to dairy products, and finally to whole milk, in the production of which the far-western regions could not compete.

During this period there was a great development of the use of irrigation to make possible the cultivation of fertile but arid districts for which a supply of water was available. The area irrigated in 1889 was about 180 times that which had been under the ditch in 1870.

For her greatly increased volume of agricultural products, both in the way of food and of raw materials, America found in this period an enlarged outlet in foreign markets.

The number of immigrants per decade was maintained; and between 1880 and 1890 it greatly increased. The newcomers were still largely from northwestern Europe; and the majority of them moved directly, or after a brief stop-over, to homesteads in the West.

Before 1890 the Union was augmented by six new states in the territory from the Dakotas to Washington and from Montana to Colorado. These states are indicated on Diagram VI by broken lines running northeast and southwest. In 1890 Idaho and Wyoming were also admitted; and the United States Census reported the passing of the frontier.

In this same period, the lumber supply of the forested sections of New England and Middle Atlantic States having become depleted, the forests of pine and hardwoods about the Great Lakes became the chief source of national supply. This involved the beginning of the settlement of a large area covering the northern parts of Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Thus came into existence the first of the greater Cut-over regions.

SINCE 1890

After 1890, the frontier being gone, came a period of more intensive development of the areas that had already begun to be settled. Many Indian lands, in consequence of a change of national policy ratified in 1887, were purchased and opened for settlement. Former Indian lands were homesteaded in the Dakotas and elsewhere. Oklahoma was colonized with amazing rapidity and became a state in 1907. By the end of 1912, moreover, the three remaining territories, Utah, Arizona and New Mexico, had also been admitted as states.

The amount of naturally arid land that was rendered available for agriculture through irrigation increased rapidly; and in 1902 Congress provided for the construction of great irrigation projects

by the nation. But a very large proportion of the arid land could not be irrigated for lack of available supplies of water.

As the better agricultural land became less abundant, attempts were made to cultivate land in subhumid regions of the Great Plains and elsewhere. Many of the experiments ended in failure. But methods of farming and strains of wheat that were adapted to subhumid areas were developed.

Moreover, the invention and use of machinery, which had been in progress ever since Jefferson substituted an iron plough for a wooden one, was greatly furthered by the application of the gasoline engine to agricultural purposes. Through the use of farm machinery, especially the "combine" harvester and thresher, it became profitable to raise wheat on the drier lands. Much territory originally used for grazing was applied to dry farming; in the Columbia Basin, for example, and to an even greater extent in the semi-arid strip of the Great Plains. Thus the Dry-farming regions began to be developed.

When the supply of lumber in the Great Lakes region approached exhaustion, production shifted first to the pine forests of the South, and then to the Northwest, where enormous quantities of huge trees were cut from the forests of Oregon, Washington and northern California. In 1930 Washington led among the states in the amount of lumber produced. Additional Cut-over districts were thus brought into existence, chiefly in Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

Factories and Cities

Meanwhile conditions in the older sections of the United States, especially in the northeastern part of the country, were greatly altered by the rise of factories. Machine production practically began in the United States when the War of 1812, by temporarily cutting off trade with Europe, led the Americans to begin to manufacture for themselves certain goods that they had previously imported. Industries were gradually transferred from the household, where they had been carried on ever since the invention of the spinning-wheel, to the factory, the process being pretty well completed by the beginning of the Civil War. Between that time and the end of the century the number of factories greatly increased, and America came to export a large amount of manufactured goods.

Since water-power was used at first, most of the factories were built at points along the fall line. Because many people were needed to work in the expanding factories, the manufacturing centers grew in population. When steam largely replaced water-

power and later when electricity came to be commonly employed, though new manufacturing centers arose, the original cities along the fall line continued to be manufacturing centers.

They had two advantages: they were already built and provided with transportation; and they were accessible to the Atlantic seaboard, so that goods could readily be exported. A number of cities on the Great Lakes, the Mississippi River and the Pacific Coast, having water communication with foreign countries, also became great manufacturing centers. A large proportion of the manufactured goods, however, was produced northeast of a line drawn from Minneapolis to Chicago and thence to the city of Washington.

Shift of Population from Country to City

Workers in city factories and offices included many persons from the country. Some came from New England farms on which western competition had rendered it difficult to make a living. Others came from level sections where the advice of the county agent and the use of farm machinery had made it possible for a larger amount of food to be raised by a smaller number of people. Left-over farmers and farm laborers, and children of farmers for whom there was no opening at home, naturally went to the town or city, where they would have the best chance of finding jobs.

The population of cities and towns, accordingly, grew much faster than that of villages and rural districts, so that although the inhabitants of urban territory formed less than three-tenths of the population of the United States in 1880, they formed more than half the total in 1920.

In some sections departures were more numerous than births and arrivals; so that population actually declined during the thirty years, not only in the rural districts of New York and New England, which include much territory belonging to the Old Hilly areas, but also in those of five states of the fertile and prosperous Corn Belt, which contain many of the districts that constitute the Old Level areas.

Automobiles on Good Roads, and Declining Neighborhoods

Improved roads and automobiles had also had far-reaching effects upon the life of country districts. Road improvement began in the day of the bicycle, back in the 1890's. The construction of improved highways was greatly stimulated by the rapid spread of automobiles, which began about 1900.

A farmer with a car would not buy his groceries at the cross-roads store if he could get them better and cheaper in a village ten or twenty miles away. As more and more farmers bought cars, the stores in country neighborhoods had to go out of business. Many of the little places lost also their blacksmiths, their schools, their post offices and their doctors. The people who had rendered the various lost services moved away. Country people became accustomed to going to towns for business and amusement. Their life no longer centered in country neighborhoods. In consequence of all this, a great many churches in hamlets and country districts were abandoned.

The centralization of interests and services was most marked in what are here called Old Level areas, where no topographical barriers interfered with easy communication between farms and centers, and where centers were well distributed over the whole area. In these areas country neighborhoods were fast losing their institutions, including many of their churches.

In the Old Hilly areas, the facilities offered by the larger centers were less accessible than in level areas, partly because of the topography and partly because there were fewer good roads. In many hilly sections, on the other hand, population had declined. The small communities among the hills were no longer able to provide for themselves the services, either secular or religious, which they had enjoyed in the past.

Changes Still in Progress

The processes of change were still going on at the time of the study. The great centers of manufacturing and commerce had not ceased growing. In older areas, the population of open-country districts continued to shrink, and the interests of country people were still shifting to the centers.

In the new kinds of territory, the limits of the various kinds of area were exhibiting a certain amount of alteration. Some stump-lands were being prepared for cultivation. Stretches of semi-arid territory were being turned from grazing land into wheat fields; and, on the other hand, certain areas where dry-farming had been attempted were being left to revert to pasture.

Throughout these new areas, the people were working hard to achieve the institutions and facilities of civilization. Even into the Mountain sections, which formed the most static of the four kinds of new territory, national forests and improved roads and schools were being introduced. An essential feature of all six types of area, then, was the fluidity of their institutions.

THE SIX KINDS OF TERRITORY IN 1928

The general situation at the time of the survey is suggested by Diagram VII, which relates the population to the amount of rainfall. Here the eastern humid area, marked with diagonal lines, is separated by the transitional line A B from the semi-arid and arid territory, distinguished here by horizontal lines. The center of area is not far east of this line, in northern Kansas. The center of population, however, was in 1920 considerably farther east, in southwestern Indiana; and the north and south line bisecting the population, marked on the map C D, passed between Indiana and Ohio and through western Georgia.

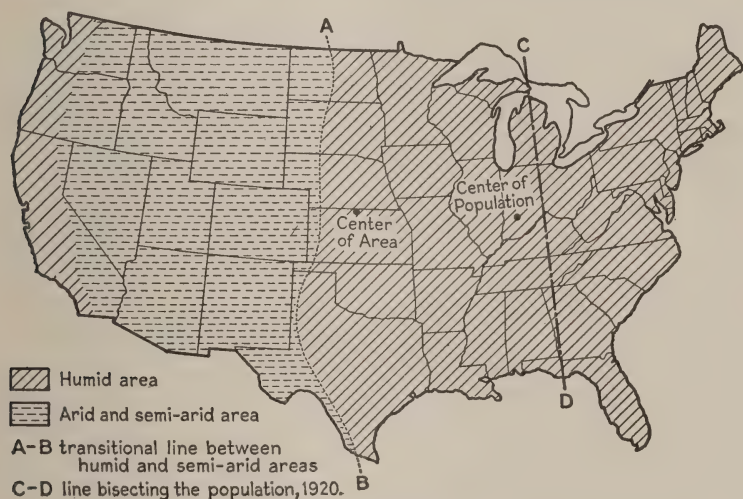


DIAGRAM VII

Outline Map of the United States showing relationship of rainfall to distribution of population

The arid region had therefore far fewer inhabitants in proportion to area than the humid territory. While the humid area east of the semi-arid line had an inhabitant for each eleven acres, the arid and semi-arid region west of the line had an inhabitant only for each 158 acres. The region was so vast, however, that it had a total population of over 3,900,000, just about that enumerated by the first census, taken in 1790, for the fourteen states that then constituted the Union.

LOCATION AND EXTENT

The map that serves as the frontispiece of this volume shows that the area representing the four types of new territory, so far

as it was covered by the study, is all situated west of the semi-arid line, with the single exception of the Great Lakes Cut-over region.

Of the vast area between the semi-arid line and the mountains near the western coast, a very large proportion is occupied by Grazing country, Dry-farming regions, and Mountain sections. The rest consists either of irrigated districts, deserts, districts near cities, or territory too miscellaneous in character to be classified.

Grazing country occupies most of the area of the intermountain plateaus and of the drier parts of the Great Plains. It is present in twelve far-western states; and counties devoted primarily to grazing occupy nearly 500,000 square miles.

Dry-farming regions are situated both in the parts of the Great Plains that are least arid and have comparatively favorable conditions of soil and topography, and in the Columbia Basin of Washington and adjoining states. Counties devoted primarily to dry-farming are found in seven western states and cover about 168,000 square miles.

The Mountain sections are found partly among the Sierras of California, but to a larger extent among the Rocky Mountains, chiefly in Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and Colorado. Mountain territory covering whole counties occupies over 170,000 square miles and has a rural population of more than 420,000.

The Cut-over region near the Great Lakes, which lies in the northern parts of Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota, has an area of over 120,000 square miles and a rural population of well over a million. That in the Pacific Northwest is less easily measured; but it includes most of the part of Washington west of the Cascade Mountains, with parts of Oregon and Idaho. Extensive Cut-over districts are also present in the South; but these were not included in the present study, and are therefore not represented on the map.

Leaving the South out of consideration, the four kinds of new territory, counting only area occupying whole counties, but including counties within which Grazing and Dry-farming territory are combined, occupy three-eighths of the area of the United States, and had in 1920 a rural population of three and one-third millions.

For the two kinds of old area studied, the extent and the number of inhabitants of territory having few of the people in the churches cannot be measured, because the poorly enlisted territory, instead of covering whole counties, is found in scattered country districts.

Old Hilly areas were investigated by the present study only in the Northeastern Highlands, which besides covering practically the whole of Vermont and most of New Hampshire, overlap eastern New York and western Maine. It is well known that valleys with few or no church-members exist also in the southern Appalachian Mountains, which overlap nine states, and in the Ozark and Ouachita Highlands of Arkansas and Missouri. The section investigated in Old Hilly areas is marked on the frontispiece map with small crosses; but the larger sections of similar character that were not investigated are not marked.

As for Old Level areas, the presence of country districts with very few of the people in the churches was ascertained, not only for Ohio, where representative counties were surveyed, but in several neighboring prairie states, such districts having been identified by different students as far west as Kansas and as far north as southern Michigan. This kind of territory is marked on the map by little circles only in Ohio, where the presence of such poorly enlisted country districts was substantiated by the present study. Indications are not lacking of their presence in a much wider area.

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS

The four kinds of new territory, in spite of the great differences among them, have in common several fundamental characteristics, most of which are paralleled in the two kinds of old areas.

Sparsity of Population

In the first place, the four new areas are very thinly settled. The Cut-over region, the most densely populated among them, had slightly less than ten inhabitants to the square mile in 1926; the Dry-farming regions had but five; the Mountain sections, two; and the Grazing country, the most sparsely settled of them all, had only one person to the square mile. Most of these regions are too dry to support a dense population; and for much of their extent they are not occupied to their fullest capacity.

In the two kinds of long-settled territory, though population is decidedly more dense, certain conditions limit the number of constituents available for social units of whatever kind. In both areas the open-country population has declined, so that institutions that were well manned a generation ago can no longer be adequately supported. Moreover, the adherence of many country people, especially in the level areas, has been detached from

country institutions through the influence of the institutions of centers.

Isolation

A second common characteristic of the new areas is isolation. Homes are far apart. The distance is frequently emphasized by bad roads, unbridged rivers, or the absence of railways. In the Mountains the isolation is most severe; because groups of people are often separated, not only by the barriers just enumerated, but also by walls of rock or by deep and precipitous canyons, and in winter by banks of snow.

In the Old Hilly areas, the hills, in combination with bad roads and long, cold and snowy winters, tend to divide the people into sharply separated communities.

Poverty

All four of the new areas also suffer from poverty. Their development was put off till late, partly because they were in a sense marginal areas. They all have serious handicaps. The Grazing regions suffer for lack of water, as do the Dry-farming sections to an only slightly less degree. The Mountain districts have among other disabilities, their topography, their altitude and the distance from markets. The Cut-over regions, with their obstinate stumps, their disastrous fires, their frequently barren soils and many other disadvantages, are probably worse off than any of the other types of new area.

The valleys among the eastern hills likewise suffer from handicaps, which, as we have seen, tell seriously against their farmers when brought into competition with farmers of other regions. The level lands of the older part of the country, moreover, though fertile and prosperous, contain as a large part of the farm population, families of tenants who are individually very poor.

Early Stage of Development

The fourth common characteristic of the new areas consists in the fact that they are new and undeveloped. Not only is the attention of the people preoccupied by the practical tasks of a pioneer country, but the mutual acquaintance and community organization favorable to the formation of social institutions have not yet been developed. These natural conditions of immature societies are especially pronounced in the Dry-farming regions, which have been the latest to come into existence.

The country districts of the older areas, moreover, are losing their former close social integration through the shifting of services and interests to the larger centers.

FINDINGS

These four common characteristics of the new areas—sparsity of population, isolation, poverty, and early stage of development—with the corresponding difficulties of the country districts of the two older kinds of territory, should be kept clearly in mind in considering the findings of the present study.

UNFAVORABLE CONDITIONS

In all six kinds of territory, the characteristics just described render church work extremely difficult. The possible constituents of any church are few, being either scattered or hemmed within narrow boundaries. The money available for the erection of community service is limited by the narrow financial margin of most of the few inhabitants.

In many areas the services which a church and a minister can offer are hindered by the absence of such facilities as telephones, good roads, and means of transportation. Moreover, in the new areas the failure to have achieved closely knit social integration, and in the old areas the fact that former social cohesiveness has been relaxed, tell particularly against the development of voluntary associations not for profit, such as are churches.

PROPORTIONS OF PEOPLE IN THE CHURCHES

Rural counties in Grazing country where predominantly Protestant, in Mountain districts, in Cut-over sections, and in Dry-farming areas, have distinctly lower proportions of population in the church-membership than rural counties generally throughout the Middle West. Moreover, in the new territory of all four kinds, counties having less than one-fifth of the people in the church-membership constitute two-fifths of the area covered, and contain one-fourth of the population: much higher proportions of both area and population than in the Middle West.

In older regions, in connection with rapid environmental changes, country churches are being abandoned and country districts and classes of country people have come to be largely outside the influence of churches. These changes have advanced furthest where their operation is not hampered by topographical barriers. In hilly districts, however, some of the same changes were discovered in a less pronounced form.

MOMENTOUS PROBLEMS

The problems presented to Protestant America by the poorly enlisted areas are not only full of difficulty, but are of vital and

far-reaching importance. For one thing, large areas and many people are involved. The four kinds of new area, as has already been stated, include three-eighths of the United States and contain about three and one-third million inhabitants. The country districts in older regions, though their area and population cannot be measured precisely, are widely distributed.

Again, the problems concerning the new areas are permanent problems. Large areas of territory of each of these four kinds are destined to be present within the boundaries of the United States for generations to come.

In the four kinds of new territory, moreover, except in the very youngest regions, the church situation is on the decline. The regions with the longer history have relatively fewer church-members than the younger regions. In five of the ten regions in which the four kinds of new area are situated, the proportions of church-members were lower in 1926 than in 1916. Persons that had been without church relations for years had become indifferent to churches. There were fewer lay leaders of churches than in the generation of original settlement.

In the Old Level areas, the abandonment of country churches was progressing at an accelerating speed, and many former members were drifting away from church relationships. In Vermont, the proportion of families adhering to churches had declined one-third in fifty years.

In the new territory, certain of the regions are destined for further development, and are at a plastic stage when their institutions can be moulded for good or ill. Social organizations are few, and altruistic agencies hardly touch these fields. Here the church has an opportunity almost without parallel in hopefulness.

Finally, in both the older and the newer areas the people of poorly enlisted communities and districts are unable to change the condition for themselves, lacking not only the resources but even the desire to do so.

INADEQUACY OF STEREOTYPED CHURCH METHODS

The expectation that under a *laissez-faire* policy religious institutions similar to those of long-established and thickly settled areas would spontaneously arise in new regions where conditions were utterly different, has not been realized. Churches are grouped together in the larger places, and many hamlets and wide country districts are without any churches at all. Methods inappropriate to the conditions are accepted as standard. Most of the Protestant churches are small, ill-equipped, inadequately financed and poorly manned.

The Protestant forces, moreover, are not coördinated, except in a few states and there to a limited degree. No comprehensive, statesmanlike program, adapted to conditions, utilizing modern inventions and adequately financed, has even been discussed. Equality of religious privilege is not conceived as an ideal.

In the country districts of the older regions, there is an equal absence of well-adjusted church policies. The religious values of abandoned churches are being allowed to go to waste, and country neighborhoods are without systematic provision either by denominations, by interdenominational agencies or by neighboring churches, even for the transfer of formal membership to the roll of a surviving church.

POSSIBILITY OF EFFECTIVE MINISTRY

For several reasons it seems that in the new kinds of territory, even under the difficult conditions prevailing there, effective church ministry is within the bounds of possibility.

This is indicated by the church history of Vermont, which makes it clear that religious conditions there have frequently been moulded by definite measures worked out by human intelligence and carried into effect by human energy.

The original churches were founded by town governments or through the missionary efforts of societies or of individual preachers. Periods of depression in church life have been experienced and have been counteracted by extended campaigns. And notwithstanding the decrease in the proportion of families represented in the church-membership and attendance in Orange County, the proportion of the population in the church-membership has been kept at the level at which it stood fifty years ago, in spite of economic difficulties and declining population.

The fact that effective ministry in the new areas is possible is indicated also by the high proportions of the population enlisted in churches in regions where Roman Catholics or Mormons predominate, although the common handicaps are present in an extreme degree. In every kind of new area, moreover, there are found rare instances of groups with common religious traditions that have established strong churches, which have thrived and handed on the traditions of the early settlers.

Finally, in spite of the serious handicaps, great progress has been made in education and in various other secular fields.

ATTEMPTED REMEDIES

Certain remedial measures are being tried out by denominational and interdenominational agencies in a very small fraction

of the poorly enlisted territory. They are experimental in character, and they frequently fail. Nevertheless these experiments seem to indicate a growing acceptance of certain new policies regarding church work. It is coming to be recognized as desirable that a single denomination should have responsibility for a unit of area, thus making possible the enlistment of all church-minded Protestants in a common church or larger parish, and also facilitating united efforts for the moral and social improvement of the whole community or area.

As a means to this end, concerted action on the part of certain of the strongest Protestant denominations is coming to be regarded as essential to success. In several states, experiments have been made in such interdenominational arrangements as allocation, exchange, and the consolidation of competing churches. In Vermont, coöperating denominational officials have made considerable progress in eliminating competition within communities.

Furthermore, a dim sense of responsibility on the part of strong churches in towns or cities for poorly served territory in their neighborhoods is being aroused in a very few places.

Then, too, because of the indifference to religion of adults in neglected areas, emphasis is being laid on the importance of religious education, especially through week-day classes and church vacation schools.

Moreover, the employment of women workers has acquired a new importance. Women have become recognized as peculiarly fitted for work in poorly enlisted districts, and women are employed here and there in virtually all the kinds of territory investigated.

Finally, a modest beginning has been made in the utilization of the resources of modern invention, including the radio.

Tentative as are these experiments, and far as they are, all taken together, from constituting a statesmanlike system for meeting the religious needs of the areas with relatively few church-members, they are hopeful in two ways. They show a dawning conception that a *laissez-faire* policy and stereotyped church methods have proved to be inadequate; and they suggest some of the policies to be employed in a possible comprehensive campaign.

Chapter II

OLD HILLY AREAS

The hilly sections of the eastern United States were settled next after the coastal plains, and are therefore very old. And while they and their churches were continually influenced during many generations by the development of younger regions farther west, they in turn influenced the religious life of the new lands, to which they sent great numbers of church-members, who carried their beliefs and church traditions with them.

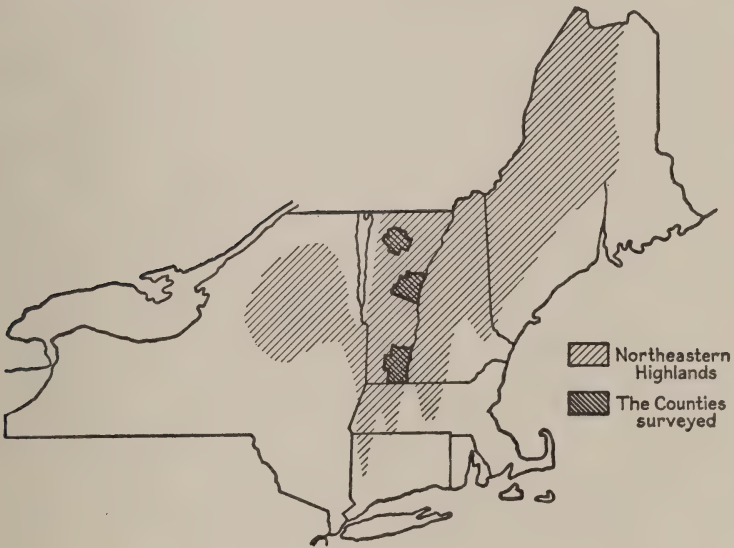


DIAGRAM VIII

Map of the Northeastern Highlands within the United States

From the viewpoint of history, therefore, these Old Hilly areas stand first among the kinds of territory of relatively low church-membership that were identified and studied in the present inquiry. Their history throws an exceptionally revealing light upon certain of the conditions that seriously affect churches in the other districts. And though in this kind of territory districts with few church-members are individually small and

scattered, they are of outstanding importance because of their large total population. Consequently this detailed report naturally begins with them.

For the intensive study Vermont was chosen, partly because it was believed to be representative of the hilly sections, especially the Northeastern Highlands, in respect to the church situation, and partly because its available historical data were of unparalleled importance.

Vermont had from early times, not only many small communities among the hills, each with several competing churches, but also many isolated districts with very little religious ministry. The effects on the churches from period to period of the gradual developmental changes wrought first by the growth of the West, and later by such movements as the rise of cities and the improvement of roads, were realized by the Protestant religious leaders in an unusual degree; and comprehensive measures were taken at several periods to adapt the churches to the altered conditions. Nevertheless, environmental changes continuing to progress, districts with few church-members, some having competing churches and some having no religious ministry, were still present in 1929.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Among the characteristics of the natural setting of Vermont, the most important for the purposes of the present study is the hilly contour.

TOPOGRAPHY

The surface of Vermont is almost covered by a complex system of corrugations ranging from low hills to lofty mountains: hardly a bit of the surface is flat. Through the middle, north and south, like a backbone, stretch the Green Mountains, which are continuous for the southern two-thirds of the way, and interrupted in the northern third. On either side of the mountains is hilly country cut deeply by many streams. On the eastern margin a narrow level strip borders the Connecticut River; and the broader Champlain Valley occupies the middle-western and northwestern portions. Some of the hills have extensive level tops covered with fertile soil. Others are sharper, with poorer soil and outcropping ledges of rock.

Among the hills are many little valleys, some of which are narrow borders of streams, widening here and there into intervals; some are small level stretches isolated among hills; others are narrow winding ravines; and rarer examples are wider level stretches covered by alluvial soil,

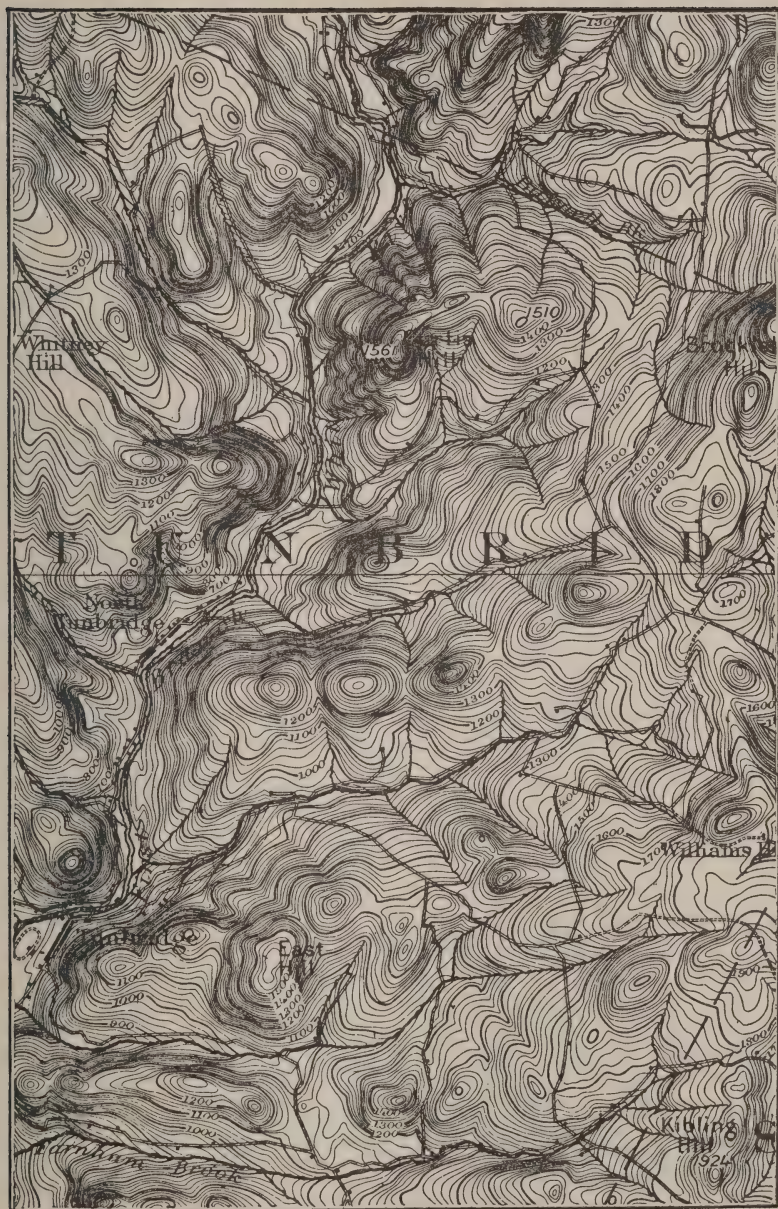


DIAGRAM IX
Contour Map of part of Orange County, Vermont

The total effect is a country divided into many small units of habitable land, hilltops and especially valleys, which are frequently separated from one another by steep slopes and devious passes. Typical Vermont topography is suggested by the contour map that forms Diagram IX, which represents a district of Orange County.

CLIMATE

Plenty of moisture is ensured to Vermont by its position near the Atlantic seaboard in combination with its hills and mountain tops. The average annual precipitation over most of the state ranges from thirty-five to forty inches, the higher figure being that of the mountain districts. Rain usually falls at convenient intervals through the summer. A few weeks without showers sometimes occur in late July or August; but in summer the valleys are always green, and the hill-pastures almost always.

Since the state lies between forty-two and forty-five degrees north latitude, it has long, cold winters, with periods when the temperature stands well below zero; and the winds among the hills blow the snow into deep drifts. The cold, the storms and the deep snow intensify the isolation characteristic of hilly country.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The natural wealth of the state is of many sorts. The mineral resources include besides some copper, valuable stone of several different kinds, the chief of which are marble, granite and slate. Widely distributed water-power is provided by the contour of the land in conjunction with the many streams. Forests of maple, beech and birch, pine, hemlock and spruce originally covered the surface, giving even to the mountains the greenness that suggested their name, and for that matter the name of the state itself; and more than half the area is still woodland.¹

Among agricultural resources the chief are the fertile soil, most of which is of glacial origin, although that in certain valleys is alluvial; the abundant rainfall; and the pastures with their brooks, their occasional trees for shade, and their freely growing grass. A final important resource of Vermont is the varied natural beauty of the mountains and hills, the woods, the waterfalls, the lakes and streams.

¹ Fifty-five per cent. Data from Ross and Merrill, *Annual Cut, Consumption and Value of Forest Products in Vermont*, Vermont Forestry Publication No. 32; 1928, p. 8.

LONG-ESTABLISHED SETTLEMENTS

For America, the communities among the Vermont hills are very old. Intensive settlement began as soon as the close of the French and Indian War in 1759 ensured safety from Indian attacks and French invasion. Development was so rapid that the Green Mountain Boys played a well-known part during the Revolutionary War; and Vermont, after a brief period of independence, became in 1791 the fourteenth state to join the Union. During the history of more than a century and a half, institutions, including churches, have had time to become deeply rooted.

A WELL-POPULATED COUNTRYSIDE

Even in 1810 the population of the state, then practically all rural, was nearly nine-tenths as large as the rural population in 1920. And the number of inhabitants continued to increase rapidly up to 1830; after which it did not change greatly in the older rural counties for a score of years.² During that time these older rural counties had thirty-nine persons to the square mile. In contrast with the four kinds of new territory covered by the present study, none of which had in 1926 as many as ten inhabitants per mile, this was well-populated country.

Not every mile had its thirty-nine inhabitants, however, because of the mountains and gorges, the forested hills and the swamps. The people lived in the small patches of habitable land. Sometimes farms stood singly; but they were frequently in groups, either on flat hilltops, strung along narrow valleys, or grouped about a fall and its mill.

SMALL COMMUNITIES

The "town," as the township is called in New England, was the unit of government in such matters as roads, taxes, and voting. It might have been expected to be the unit in economic or social life; for the towns were small. Their average area was thirty-six square miles, and five-sixths of them had an area of not more than forty-two square miles. If they had been square, the average town would have measured but six miles across either way, and five-sixths of the towns would have measured not more than six and a half miles across. Even though on account of the topography the towns presented all sorts of queer shapes, very few points were more than four or five miles from the middle of their towns.

In those days, however, distances meant more than they do

² Orange, Addison and Windsor counties. Their combined population was 92,848 in 1830, and 92,165 in 1850.

today. The horse and the springless wagon afforded the general means of transportation. The roads, too, were very poor. Many of them still ran over the hills, where the rocks cropped out; and people had not yet learned to cover the natural soil, much of which is clay in Vermont, with a layer of gravel. In spring yellow mud, in which the wheels of carts and buggies frequently sank nearly to the axle, filled the roads for weeks together.

Considering the bad roads and the horse-drawn transportation in connection with the serious topographical barriers, it is only natural that most towns were divided into a number of communities, especially when centers in valleys came to be added to the earliest centers on the hilltops.

The town of Thetford, for example, which is of just the average area, had and still has six distinct communities a mile and a half to three miles apart: East Thetford, North Thetford, Thetford Center, Thetford Hill, Post Mills and Union Village. Hardly any towns had fewer than two centers and most towns had from three to five.

SELF-SUFFICING COMMUNITIES

These centers were miniature communities, each with its stores, its school, its blacksmith shop and its church or churches. Many of the neighborhoods provided with water-power had each a little mill or two. In 1810, Orange and Windham counties had, besides sawmills and grist-mills, thirty-two fulling-mills, twenty-two tanneries, eleven distilleries, nine hatteries and six naileries, besides several other establishments of a miscellaneous character.

Each community had its teacher and its doctor, and many had also one or two ministers. They were obliged to have necessary services right at hand, because it was always difficult to go outside for them, and in winter it was often impossible. All the little centers had farms on the outskirts and round about wherever the topography allowed.

The farmers of those days had to raise such products as were needed for home consumption or could be marketed at rare intervals. They produced their own grain, which was ground into flour or feed at the local mills. They drew from maple trees their own sugar and syrup. They raised flax, wool, and hemp; and from these they spun and wove their own clothing.

In 1810 the United States Census reported an annual production in Orange and Windham counties taken together of a grand total of 477,987 yards of various textiles, including linen, woolen, hempen and even cotton goods, all manufactured in

families. This made nine yards to provide materials for the new clothing of the average inhabitant. The same census reported one solitary cotton mill, which produced only 2,500 yards in a year.

As money crops, the farmers raised potatoes and live stock. The last was so important that these years are called the "live-stock period" of Vermont agriculture. Beef-cattle were shipped, and cheese and butter were made. Sheep were raised in even greater numbers than cattle, being in 1850 three times as numerous as the human inhabitants; and wool was an important product.

In these years, too, especially toward the end of the period, the virgin timber of the woods was being cut and shipped. The people, who were mainly of English and Scotch stock, were thrifty, prosperous and ambitious, and in course of time they had built or acquired large, comfortable houses, which they kept trim and well painted. Many of them had savings, either invested or tucked away in old stockings. They had a substantial though unpretentious prosperity. They looked well after their public buildings and their bit of common, where stood a Revolutionary cannon. And with the rest they looked after their meeting-houses, the white steeples of which stood out plainly among the green hills.

THE EARLY CHURCHES

Churches began to be organized in Vermont in the early 1760's, within a few years of the arrival of the first settlers.³ The first churches, which were Congregational, were planted partly through the efforts of missionaries from Connecticut, partly on the initiative of town governments. A little later Baptist churches of two kinds were started by the preachers of Baptist churches farther south. Then followed Universalist, Methodist and Episcopal churches, each originated by zealous preachers or as a result of missionary enterprise. A little later Adventists arose through the preaching of a man named Miller. Smaller numbers of churches of several other denominations were also introduced.

In the planting and promotion of many churches, an influential part was played by individual settlers of religious principle and forceful leadership. The churches of all kinds, then, were started through human initiative, exerted through town

³ Only a brief summary of the church history of rural Vermont can be given in the text. A fuller presentation of the facts upon which this summary is based is presented in Appendix IV.

governments or home-missionary societies, or in the person of denominational preachers or local laymen.

Since theological doctrines were vital issues in those days, churches or societies⁴ of several different denominations were organized in most of the little communities among the hills. Many towns had four such denominational groups; and groups of six were not unknown. The support of so many religious organizations was made possible by several conditions peculiar to those early days. The different religious organizations of a community or of a town frequently combined to erect a union meeting-house, which they used in alternation, at least till one or more of the groups became strong enough to erect a separate building.

In that age, too, church expenditures were comparatively low. Moreover, church services formed the chief medium of social intercourse for a large majority of the people, many of whom during the week lived in considerable isolation on their farms, so that the number of families contributing to the churches was comparatively large.

Many churches, however, in common with human institutions of other kinds, showed a tendency to grow weak; and from time to time churches fell into inactivity. Vigorous measures adopted by local leaders or denominational agencies in some cases resulted in a renewal of activity and strength. In other cases, where restorative measures were lacking or inadequate, churches were abandoned.

A considerable number of towns, moreover, because of unusual isolation, subdivision of the area by hills, inability to agree on a site for a union building, lack of leadership, or for some other reason, had no churches or very weak ones. Districts with few church-members existed even in early days.

The religious heritage which this early period passed on to later years included, therefore, on the one hand, historic churches with beautiful buildings, dear associations and ancestral loyalties; and, on the other hand, competing churches in small communities, and districts where organized religion was at a very low ebb.

CHANGES, 1840 TO 1880

Even before 1840 processes of change had been at work. News of the rich and easily cultivated plains of the Old Level areas

⁴The word *society* as used here means a secular organization for holding church property and conducting business connected with religious services. See Appendix IV, p. 289.

had reached the owners of many cramped and rocky farms on the Vermont hills. Canals and railroads gradually brought into the market where Vermont sold her live stock and her wool, similar products raised more cheaply in the Middle West.

By that time most of the virgin timber had been cut. Declining prosperity at home, combined with alluring prospects in the West and improved means of transportation, led many Vermonters to migrate to the newer lands.

Those departing from Vermont included many men of force and initiative who had been leaders in the churches. The contagion of example took large groups from certain communities, so that some churches lost half their members. Moreover, the migration naturally took place in part from the rougher and more isolated towns where the conditions of existence were most severe; and in small communities the loss of even a single family of church leaders was sometimes disastrous to the welfare of the church.

By about the middle of the century the condition of many Congregational churches, especially in isolated places, was recognized as serious. After a study of the situation, large numbers of theological students were sent into secluded towns. This so-called "itinerant" system was employed on a large scale for several years, till anxiety was allayed.

In the decade following 1870, however, the state of the churches of Vermont aroused general concern; and an interdenominational campaign, in which laymen took a prominent part, was conducted under the auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association.

Between 1850 and 1880, the development of the Middle West advanced; and products of western farms were brought more and more extensively into eastern markets by the multiplying lines of railways. Western competition gradually diminished the prosperity of the farms among the Vermont hills; and a period of readjustment was begun.

Instead of live stock, farmers came to produce cheese, then cheese and butter; and by 1880 butter alone had become the leading agricultural product. In output of timber, too, the section including Vermont yielded first place during this period to the Great Lakes Cut-over region, which was then being exploited.

Shrinking opportunities on the farms and in the woods resulted in the departure of increasing numbers of families for the West, and in a consequent decline of population in the rural districts.

THE SITUATION IN 1880

By 1880 the self-sufficingness of the hill communities had become less marked. Railroads had been present in Vermont for thirty years. Many necessities formerly made in the households, such as textiles and men's clothing, were now manufactured in factories.

Yet the small communities, though they had somewhat fewer inhabitants, still kept many of their former functions. Most of them still had factories; which, though the product had in many cases been changed, still supported groups of local families. Some communities had academies, which brought to them in the corps of teachers educated men and women accustomed to leadership, and also attracted as residents a class of persons who valued the advantages of such institutions. A considerable number of centers, including some of the smaller hamlets, had their own doctors, public-school teachers and ministers. Social organizations, especially granges and lodges, had been introduced, and had come to be important centers of social intercourse. Two-thirds of the people lived on farms, which were still scattered even in remote corners of the towns.⁵ The farm families continued to live in considerable isolation; for the roads were still bad, and the horse, now hitched to the spring wagon or buggy, continued to be the general means of transportation.

By 1880, then, there were in evidence hardship and readjustment on the farms, a declining country population, and a multiplication of social organizations. The social pattern, however, was still one of small communities largely distinct from one another, and of scattered farms, on which two-thirds of the population lived in a considerable degree of isolation.

Meanwhile, to the religious elements previously present had been added Roman Catholic churches, originally for Irish immigrants who came to work on the construction of the railways and afterwards acquired farms; and also families of Spiritualists, recruited during the excitement over Spiritualism in the 1860's and 1870's. On the other hand, theological issues were no longer considered of paramount importance. Many of the small societies that had once held services in union buildings had gradually faded out, and some of the competing churches had also been abandoned.

⁵This and other facts regarding the situation in 1880 are based on the findings of an inquiry into conditions in Orange County, Vermont, in 1880, which formed part of the present study. This inquiry is described in Appendix V.

Much competition, however, still remained. In Orange County in 1880, nearly three-fourths of the churches in small centers were in the presence of at least one other church. Eight hamlets of fewer than 150 inhabitants had two churches each; and two larger hamlets, each having a population of about 180, had three churches apiece. Only four centers of more than 150 inhabitants, and only one center of more than 250 inhabitants, had but a single church each.

At that time in Orange County, three-fifths of the families were represented in the membership of the churches or in the attendance at preaching services or Sunday school. The proportion was highest for families living in villages, of whom more than three-fourths were churchgoing. Of families in hamlets, the proportion was seven-tenths; and of those in the open country, something more than half.

Only one-sixth of the people of the county were enrolled in the church-membership. Church-members formed one-fourth of the villagers, one-fifth of the inhabitants of hamlets, and one-seventh of the people residing in the open country.

Low as were these average proportions, the proportions of some districts were lower still. Seven of the eleven towns with hamlets but no villages had fewer than one-sixth of the people in the churches; and the proportions of the open-country parts of towns containing villages ran as low as one-eighth.

Church competition in small centers and the comparatively low proportions of church-members in country districts, particularly in certain towns, were conditions common in 1880 in many parts of rural Vermont.⁶ Again, as previously in the history of Vermont churches, environmental conditions had changed, and in consequence the churches had suffered. When steps were taken to adjust church policies to the new conditions, the need of the isolated districts was recognized first by the religious leaders. In the decade 1880 to 1890, the Congregationalists sent pairs of young women as missionaries to the remote rural districts; and the results were considered encouraging.

Some years after the building of the Union Pacific Railroad in 1869, an enormous extension of the Grazing regions intensified the effects of western agricultural competition on Vermont agriculture. The continued decline of population in small communities in time reduced the number of inhabitants to so low a point that the maintenance of the former local institutions became difficult.

⁶ The procedure through which this conclusion was reached is described in Appendix IV, p. 294.

In the 1890's the state denominational leaders of the Protestant denominations strongest in Vermont came to believe that the little centers, since their populations had declined while the standard of church expenditures had risen, had more churches than they could well support. The leaders saw the churches growing weaker; and they feared that if population declined still more the competing churches might end by killing one another, and leave no religious institutions at all. They accordingly united in a campaign against competition, which at the time of the survey had lasted thirty years and was still in progress. Their efforts gradually lessened, and in many places entirely eliminated, competition among churches within the same small community.

CHANGES SINCE 1900

After 1900 marked changes again took place in the environment of Vermont churches.

AGRICULTURE

Western competition growing steadily more intense, farming in Vermont, even on a butter-making basis, became less remunerative. At the same time the development of factories in cities attracted young people from the farms by the offer of better financial returns. Between 1900 and 1920 a marked decline took place in the number of farms, the proportion of land in farms, and the acreage of improved land.

After 1915 came a rapid change from the production of butter to the shipping of whole milk. Here was a field in which the distant West could not compete. The cities of southern New England were accessible from the farms east of the mountains and those of New York state cities from farms to the west of them. Grass, climate, pasture, and forage crops were all readily attainable; and by 1929 practically every farm near the railroads was shipping whole milk as its main product.

After the passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914, county agents and other representatives of the state division of extension, in coöperation with farm-bureau organizations, disseminated information regarding progressive agricultural methods. Coöperative marketing associations were also multiplied, and came to be patronized by many farmers.

A survey of dairying in two towns, one in Orange County and the other in an adjoining county, found that of the 186 farmers investigated 70 per cent. were engaged in some form of coöperative effort, including the marketing of milk, the purchase of

grain, the testing of cows, and the certification of seed potatoes.⁷ Owing in part to farm-bureau and coöperative activities, and in part to the shift to whole milk, agriculture was considered in 1929 to be established on a stable and prosperous basis again.

SHRINKING POPULATION

The decline of population in rural areas that began before 1880, continued for fifty years. Between 1880 and 1920, of the 228 rural towns in Vermont, 191—that is, five-sixths of the number—lost population. Eighty-two towns, almost all secluded among the hills, lost more than half their inhabitants. The loss of population was not in the villages. Thirty-three of the thirty-seven towns with rising population were the towns containing the larger villages. In Orange County, the village population rose about one-tenth. More precisely, the four villages on the railway gained in population; the other three villages, small and away from the railway, lost inhabitants although one of them was the county-seat. Twenty-two of the twenty-seven hamlets also lost population, the others remaining about the same. Collectively the hamlets lost more than one-third of their inhabitants; and their average population declined from 122 to 82. In 1929 not one had as many as 175 inhabitants.

The open-country districts of Vermont also lost one-third of their inhabitants. This decline brought the average open-country density from twenty-five persons per square mile down to thirteen. The decline, moreover, was much greater in some towns than in others. As butter has to be shipped frequently, and milk must be shipped daily, nearness to centers and railroads and the character of roads became matters of vital importance. Therefore the greatest shrinkage in population was experienced by the so-called "inland" towns away from the railroad; and, within other towns, by the neighborhoods on the wide hilltops and by isolated farms on hill-roads. Many such farms were abandoned, as were many others having poor soil or steep, rocky slopes. No longer, as in 1880, was the population comparably dense from town to town. Eleven towns came to have fewer than eighteen inhabitants per square mile; and one of these towns, fewer than two persons per mile. Between 1890, when rural population was first enumerated by the Census, and 1920, Vermont as a whole lost one in seven of her rural inhabitants.

The gradual decline in population continued during the decade 1920 to 1930, during which the five rural counties of the state

⁷ Data from H. P. Young, *Studies in Vermont Dairy Farming, III. Randolph Royalton Area*, Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station, 1927, p. 9.

lost 4 per cent. of their inhabitants. Not one of the thirty-eight rural towns of Orange and Windham counties gained as much as 10 per cent. in population, and fourteen towns lost more than 10 per cent. The loss was not in the villages, the population of which remained fairly constant, but in the hamlets and the open country.

ENTER THE FRENCH CANADIANS

Not only did population decline during this period, but to some extent it changed in racial composition. Farms sold by the original Yankee families that had occupied them for generations, were frequently bought by French Canadians. In 1920 the proportion of the population that consisted of French Canadians was 4 per cent. for the state as a whole. It varied from 11.7 per cent. in Orleans County, which borders on Canada, to less than 1 per cent. in Windham County on the southern border. As these people have large families, the proportions of French-Canadian stock, including children born in the United States, were two or three times as great.

These newcomers established themselves chiefly on fertile valley farms. Those in Orange County were chiefly in three towns near quarries. They had come originally to work in the quarries, and had later bought farms in the vicinity, largely through the mediation of a real estate agent of their own race.

In 1929 the influx had greatly slackened, though here and there a farm was still being acquired by a French Canadian. French-Canadian farmers were learning progressive methods of agriculture, chiefly from county agents; and a few men of this racial stock were in positions of leadership in the state.

These people are thrifty and hard-working. They have large families and a lower standard of living than their native-born neighbors. At first they understood little English; and they were Catholics. Naturally they have not amalgamated readily with the older elements of the population in social institutions; and the number of persons on whom the welfare of these institutions depends has been correspondingly curtailed.

SUMMER VISITORS

Another invading element consists of summer visitors. Many vacation seekers have purchased land, usually on the hills or beside the lakes. In Bennington County alone, where the development is most pronounced, this kind of property was valued in 1929 at \$10,000,000. Owners of summer homes are of assistance to the towns in which their property is situated through

the taxes they pay. Another kind of summer visitor frequents hotels, boarding-houses and summer camps. A third variety consists of tourists in automobiles who became over-night guests at many farms and village houses. In a survey of these places, made in connection with the Comprehensive Survey of Vermont, it was estimated that they had accommodations for 62,000 tourists. All these people bring trade to many kinds of businesses.⁸

IMPROVEMENT OF ROADS

Highway improvement is a serious problem in Vermont. The hilly contours, steep grades, projecting ledges and numerous streams present serious difficulties. Vermont, however, was one of the very first states to take steps toward making her roads better. In 1892 a state tax was voted, the proceeds of which were to be distributed to the towns for use on the roads. Two years later a survey of the roads was made, and a series of further measures followed; for the automobile, invented about 1895, began its swift invasion, Ford's company being formed in 1903; and the spread of cars led to increased attention to road construction. In 1927 a survey of traffic was followed by the adoption of a comprehensive program for road improvement over a period of years.⁹

The flood of November, 1927, which ruined many miles of important valley roads and carried away hundreds of bridges, acted as a stimulus to redoubled efforts; and many millions of dollars were appropriated, to be expended in the next few years.

In 1929 all but the back roads were at least graveled, many being also surface-treated; and some highways on which traffic was exceptionally heavy had been paved. Many roads over the hills, however, were poor. Traffic follows the improved highways, which are in the valleys, even at the expense of detours of many miles. People who live on farms upon the hills and on the back roads find travel difficult even in summer. And five-eighths of the farms were on dirt roads in 1925.

In the long winters, the main roads are plowed and the snow upon them, where not swiftly melted, is packed so that they carry automobile traffic. On all other roads horse-drawn vehicles have to be employed. The people on the back roads have a harder time of it in some respects than in former days; for the

⁸The facts in this paragraph were collected by one of the divisions of the comprehensive survey of Vermont and were reported at a public conference.

⁹Data from *Report of a Survey of Transportation on the State Highways of Vermont, 1927*, pp. 9 ff.

sleighs once generally used in winter are not adapted to the automobile highways, and the disability of the hill farmers is contrasted with the greater convenience of those living in centers or on main roads.

In passenger cars per 1,000 of the population in 1927, Vermont ranked fairly high—thirty-third among the states.¹⁰ Only a small proportion of the farmers had cars, however. The survey of transportation by the State Highway Department in 1927 discovered that only a tenth of the automobile traffic was in farm-owned cars. Horses and buggies were still indispensable and were common on the roads and in the centers even in summer.

SCHOOLS

Much attention has been paid to the improvement of the schools. For the old-time system of school districts, by which each small neighborhood conducted its own school affairs, a township system has been substituted. Superintendents are in charge of the schools of several neighboring towns. There was a study about 1924 of the schools of the state. Requirements for "standard" and "superior" schools had been formulated, and in 1929 had been met by 413 schools, between one-sixth and one-fifth of the total number. And more than a tenth of the pupils were transported to school for at least one term in the year. Widely distributed high schools have contributed to the passing of the old academies.

The consolidation of schools, which during this period advanced rapidly in many parts of the United States, did not make much progress in Vermont, owing chiefly to the topography and to the condition of the back roads, especially in winter. In the state as a whole not one schoolhouse in twenty was used for consolidated schools, Vermont being in this respect only thirteenth among the states.¹¹ Orange County had in 1929 but a single consolidated school, and that was in a town where virtually all the year-round families lived in a very small area. The state over, there were in 1928 twenty-two public schools to every one hundred square miles, so that if evenly distributed they would have been hardly more than a couple of miles apart. Orange and Windham counties had 311 schools, twenty-one per one hundred square miles. The large number of schools was a matter of deliberate policy; it was the aim of the school authori-

¹⁰ See Appendix VI, Table XII.

¹¹ See Table XII.

ties of the state that no child should be more than two miles from a school.

RURAL DELIVERY

Another innovation after 1900 was the rural free delivery of mail. The first tentative experiment of this nature was made in 1896. In 1900 the Official Postal Guide did not report a single rural route in the counties surveyed. Orange and Windham counties then had ninety-six post offices. Rural delivery was gradually introduced, till in 1930 the two counties had fifty routes. Some of the post offices were closed, but only about a fourth of them after all, and most of these were in country neighborhoods; for the grouping of a considerable part of the people in villages and hamlets, where they could easily call for their mail, tended to perpetuate the local offices.

DECLINE IN IMPORTANCE OF SMALL CENTERS

Following the changes just described, and related more particularly to the passing of the horse-drawn vehicle and poor roads to make way for the automobile and improved highways, the lesser centers have lost part of their former importance. Some of their old functions, however, they have retained.

Functions Retained

Orange and Windham counties have fifty-eight rural centers, including six villages of 500 to 2,500 inhabitants, four smaller villages of from 250 to 500, and forty-eight hamlets of populations under 250. Many of these rural centers have mills. The industrial plants in the counties about the time of the survey included eighty-four sawmills and forty-eight wood-working plants making objects as diverse as bobbins and butter-boxes, fishing rods and coffins. Either sawmill or wood-working plant, or both, were present at fifty-three rural points, most of them small centers.¹² There were also twenty grist-mills, twelve mines or quarries, and a number of other plants of various kinds.

Furthermore, stores adequate to supply constantly recurring needs are still present in the small places; and others have been introduced to supply the wants of summer visitors and tourists, such as filling stations, tea rooms, confectionery stores, and way-side stands of various kinds.

The fifty-eight rural centers have also educational and social institutions of several kinds. Even the little centers have all

¹² Data from *Annual Cut, Consumption and Value of Forest Products in Vermont*, parts III and IV.

kept their public schools. The local school serves as a means of developing united community spirit in many places through efforts to meet the conditions required of a "standard" or "superior" school.

Libraries established years ago, and still much prized, are present in forty-one rural communities, as they are in 212 such communities in the state at large. These libraries help to unite the communities, not only through contacts incident to the exchange of reading matter, but through joint efforts to conduct them and to enlarge the supply of books. A surprising number of libraries, too, are housed in beautiful buildings, sometimes the gift of native sons, in which the local people take a common pride.

Granges are present in thirty-four communities, farm-bureau groups in many places, and lodges in the larger villages. Post offices are found in fifty centers, including many of the smallest. Finally, one or more churches are present in all the rural centers except four.

To maintain all these institutions at their former level, however, grows difficult for the hamlets, from which one-third of the population has departed; and the same thing is true to some extent of the smaller villages away from railroads.

Functions Lost

Among functions the smaller communities have lost, is the shipping of produce. Only the larger villages on railways, as a rule, serve any longer as shipping points for the products of the farms. The chief product, milk, has to be delivered directly or indirectly to shipping points on the railway. Most farmers deliver their own milk, making a daily trip, therefore, to one of the larger villages. While there, they naturally make purchases at village stores and possibly have other contacts with village institutions.

The farmers who sell cream, as do many of those living at a distance from the railroad, are obliged to deliver it to the creameries at frequent intervals. Some of the small centers have creameries, but many do not. In the latter case the farmer is taken away from the natural center of his district. So far as marketing is through coöperatives, moreover, it establishes business relations with agencies covering an area much wider than the home community.

In the second place, in spite of the existence of stores in the little places, much shopping is done in neighboring villages, in larger towns, and through mail-order houses. Such purchases

naturally include furniture, the better kinds of clothing, and luxuries of all kinds.

Again, many of the small centers have lost the power to offer opportunities for earning a livelihood attractive to all their young people. These boys and girls are drawn away from small centers and from hill-farms to the industries and business offices of the cities. On the other hand, some districts near cities or quarries have come to have residents whose occupations and other major interests are outside the communities in which they reside.

Again, the small centers have lost their doctors. The survey of Rural Health forming part of the Comprehensive Survey of Vermont reported that 116 of the 240 towns of Vermont were without doctors in 1929; that many people lived from five to thirty-five miles from a physician; and that places that had formerly had four or five doctors had none. The villages that once had academies, as has been said, have lost them. Many communities have also lost their local papers, or have retained only a local title prefixed to a sheet prepared for many communities.

Furthermore, the small centers have lost almost entirely their local recreations. In earlier days the people of these little communities enjoyed themselves together over lyceum lectures, debates, amateur entertainments and church socials. Today the chief forms of amusement are outside the community. People go to the moving-picture theatres in the larger places. They dance in public dance halls near and far. In summer they drive about the picturesque country. In 1927, at least half the traffic in passenger cars registered in Vermont was for pleasure.¹³ Many parties traveling in cars visit friends in other centers or on farms; others seek amusement parks or ball games. Lodge meetings take people to the larger villages. Visits of days' or weeks' duration are made to cities, especially to Boston and New York, by those with the inclination and the necessary funds. As many of these forms of recreation presuppose the ownership of an automobile and the expenditure of money for gasoline, admission fees and the like, the poorer people have less recreation than formerly.

For all, however, whether poorer or more comfortably off, the everyday world has been enlarged. The daily paper, the magazines, the radio, bring to secluded valleys the news of the wide world. The horizon is no longer bounded by the near hills. The

¹³ Data from *Report of a Survey of Transportation*, pp. 47, 48.

multiplicity of interests and activities is in marked contrast to the situation when the chief medium of social information and intercourse was the preaching service of the local church.

Regarding leadership, in some small communities where population has greatly declined or has changed in composition, the families that for generations furnished intelligent and responsible leadership have frequently been among those to leave. In more prosperous communities, however, where population has more nearly retained its former level and constitution, representatives of the leading families still feel responsible for the support and conduct of local institutions, such as schools, granges, farm-bureau units, and churches.

The centers from which towns or larger villages are readily accessible have lost their local institutions and community ties to a greater extent than those in more isolated locations. Their residents, however, have not as a rule assumed formal relations with the institutions of the larger places.

Some of the current tendencies toward change, such as highway improvement and the growth of large centers, though in operation in Vermont, are impeded by the topographical conditions of the hill country. Other new developments, such as consolidation of schools and abandonment of post offices, have scarcely begun. The hamlets are still miniature communities; and their consciousness of identity is fostered by the hills, which if less obstructive than of old, still serve as visible reminders of long-accepted boundaries.

THE CHURCH SITUATION, 1929

Greatly decreased population in community units originally small; altered composition of the population to a limited extent in some districts; a changing social pattern whereby the horizon has widened and small communities have lost some of their centripetal force—these environmental changes naturally affect the churches.

FEWER CHURCHES

Since the churches were many even in former days when inhabitants were more numerous, some churches have naturally disappeared as population has declined. In Vermont as a whole, between 1906 and 1926, there was a net loss of 144 churches, nearly one-sixth the total number. Only one state in the Union lost a higher proportion. Orange County had sixty-seven churches in 1880, and six more were organized afterwards. Six churches were consolidated with neighboring churches, and nine-

teen churches were closed. In 1929, accordingly, the county had only forty-eight churches, about two-thirds as many as in 1880. In the three counties surveyed, fifty-four churches were eliminated between 1900 and 1929.

HOW MANY CHURCH-MEMBERS?

And what of the efficiency of the remaining churches?

In the five rural counties of Vermont taken together, about one-third of the people were members of the churches in 1926. The proportion was similar for Windham County in 1929. In Lamoille County the proportion was not much more than a quarter, and in Orange County it was less than a fifth. One-

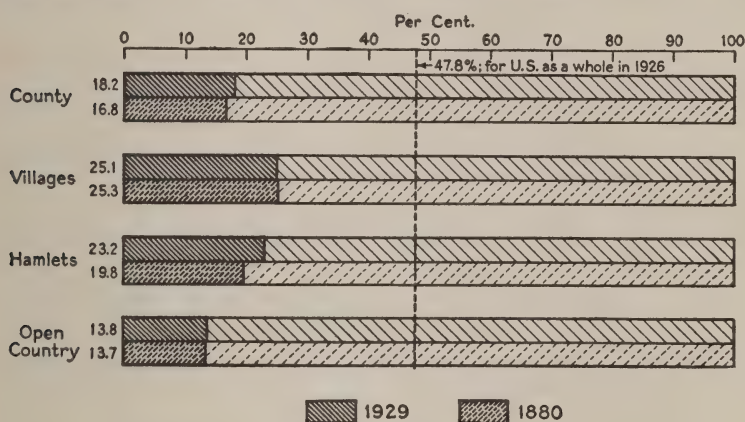


DIAGRAM X

Proportion of population in the church-membership in Orange County, Vermont, 1929 and 1880, by size of community

fourth of the villagers of Orange County were members of the churches; somewhat less than a fourth of the inhabitants of hamlets; and little more than an eighth of the people living in the open country. As Diagram X shows, these proportions were remarkably similar to those for 1880, though the proportion for hamlets had slightly risen.

The proportions were closely similar to those for the same kinds of communities in the other two Vermont counties surveyed. The proportion of church-members in the open country, for example, was one-eighth in Windham County, a trifle lower than that for the country districts of Orange County; and that for Lamoille County was somewhat higher but not much higher, being one-sixth.

The proportions for the country districts of the individual towns of Orange County were almost invariably low. Only two

such districts had as many as one-fifth of the people in the churches, and six had fewer than a tenth.

Few as the church-members were, however, they were no fewer in proportion to the number of inhabitants than they had been in 1880. Judged by the test of church-membership alone, the level of church efficiency had not fallen in the fifty years.

HOW MANY CHURCH FAMILIES?

The proportion of families adhering to the churches, however, tells a somewhat different story, as is shown graphically in Diagram XI. Only about two-fifths of the Orange County families were represented at church or Sunday school in 1929, whereas in 1880 the proportion represented was about five-eighths. The proportion of families adhering to the churches in 1929 was

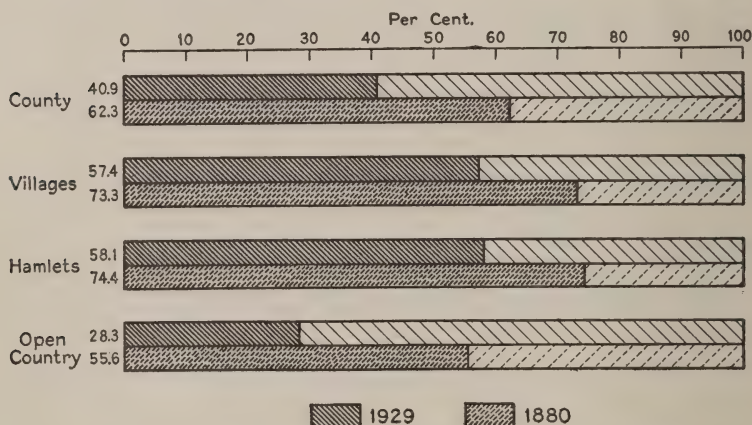


DIAGRAM XI

Proportion of families adhering to churches in Orange County, Vermont, 1929 and 1880, by size of community

therefore a third lower than at the earlier period. In the villages and hamlets, the proportion was only three-fourths what it had been. In the open-country districts it was only about half as high; and not much more than a quarter of the families were under the direct influence of the churches. In 1880 there were eight church families for every nine church-members; but in 1929 there were only six families to each nine members. This naturally restricted both the influence of the churches and the sources of their financial support.

SMALLER ATTENDANCE AT CHURCH

By all accounts, attendance at church was lower than it had been. The average attendance at the fifty-eight hamlet churches

in the three counties surveyed was only thirty-two; and nine hamlet churches had average congregations of fewer than fifteen persons each. The average congregation of the twenty country churches was twenty-seven; and half the country churches had fewer than fifteen at an average service.

The decline in church attendance was corroborated by earlier studies in Windsor County, which adjoins Orange County on the south.¹⁴ Attendance had seriously decreased between 1880 and 1921, both for village and country churches as groups, and for every individual church. And the ratio to Protestant population of the attendance at Protestant churches had fallen off more than one-half.¹⁵

SHRINKING SUNDAY-SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Dr. C. Luther Fry has shown that for the United States as a whole "the proportion of young people attending church schools is greater today than in 1906, but less than in 1916."¹⁶ In Vermont, however, the proportion did not rise between 1906 and 1916, and it fell sharply in the following decade, so that from not much less than half in 1906 it fell to a little more than a third in 1926. The decline still continued up to 1929. The report of the Congregational state superintendent for 1929 contained these words:

In my last report I called your attention to the steady decline in the membership and attendance of our Sunday schools over a period of forty years. . . . 1929 witnessed a further substantial decline in Sunday-school membership.¹⁷

Officials of the state Council of Religious Education also recognized a general shrinkage of enrollment. Part of this shrinkage was owing to a decline in the number of adults attending Sunday school.

UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS WERE CHURCH-MEMBERS FEW?

The six districts of Orange County having in 1929 the fewest church-members in proportion to population had several characteristics in common. They were away from the railroad. They were also distinctly hilly, so much so that they were in some degree divided into sections by the topography. All had lost

¹⁴ See Gill and Pinchot, *The Country Church* (New York; MacMillan, 1913), pp. 74-81, 110; and Fry, *Diagnosing the Rural Church* (New York; Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1924), p. 214 ff.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *The U. S. Looks at Its Churches* (New York; Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1930), p. 58. Data below from table, p. 121.

¹⁸ *Minutes of the Vermont Congregational Conference—1930*, p. 52.

population since 1880, and two had lost more than half their former number of inhabitants.

The density of all had fallen below eighteen persons per square mile, and one had come to have fewer than two persons per mile. None of them, according to the county agricultural agent, were among the most progressive towns in agricultural matters; indeed, five were classed among the six least progressive towns in the county.

In 1880 the proportions of the population in the churches had already been low, being not far from the average for the county. In each case the proportion was considerably lower still in 1929. At the latter period, in six of the towns fewer than one person in ten were church-members.

The environmental conditions of these towns obviously presented difficulties in the way of church work. How about the degree of enlistment in more prosperous districts? The towns having fertile valleys, railroad communication and a more progressive and prosperous agriculture, had proportions for the country districts that were higher, indeed, than the exceptionally low proportions of the inland towns, yet that did not vary greatly from the average for the county. Not one of these favored towns had as many as one in five of the country people in the churches.

The two towns having the highest degrees of enlistment of country people were towns in which Roman Catholic French Canadians had settled. These towns had had few country church-members in 1880; and the number of Protestant members had not greatly changed: it was the Catholics that had raised the proportions. The only other town with French Canadians had also a much higher proportion for the country than in 1880. And these were the only towns where the proportions of country people in the churches had risen more than a few points.

POORLY ENLISTED DISTRICTS

Country districts having few church-members were found not only in Orange County, but in each of the other two counties surveyed. As for Windham County, fewer than one-tenth of the people in the open-country districts of thirteen towns were church-members; and in these districts lived two-fifths of the population of the county outside the two large centers.

Poorly enlisted districts, indeed, were present in every county in the state. Eighty-two entire towns, shaded in Diagram XII, from two to ten in each county, had markedly few church-members in proportion to inhabitants. Many of these towns were among the hills and mountains. All but three lost population

between 1880 and 1920; and nineteen lost more than half their inhabitants. In the forty years their combined population declined three-eighths, 36.9 per cent. Eighteen of these towns had fewer than two hundred inhabitants in 1920; and six had always had so few people that they were without institutions of any kind. These were exceptions, however. Taken together, the



DIAGRAM XII

Map of Vermont, showing 82 towns having few church-members in 1926 eighty-two poorly enlisted towns constituted one-third of the 240 towns of Vermont, and covered more than a quarter of the area. Their population in 1920 was over 25,000, nearly one-tenth that of the state, and equivalent to the combined population of five of the leading cities. And the average population per town, which had been 663 in 1880, was 418 in 1920.

The density of many of these towns was low. They included all the towns with fewer than six inhabitants per mile, and three-

fourths of the towns with from six to eighteen persons to the mile. In addition they included twenty-two towns in the next higher range of density, or between one-sixth and one-fifth of the towns in this group. None of these poorly enlisted towns had as many as forty-five inhabitants to the square mile.

Most of these eighty-two towns were isolated. Fifty-one had no railroad, thirty-five had no state highway, and thirty had neither railroad nor highway.

In 1929 every one of these eighty-two towns had very limited church ministry. Twenty, though they had one or more churches, had no resident minister. Seven more had churches without ministers, and were apparently inactive. Nine additional towns had religious ministry only in summer. Thirteen had no church at all.

The religious situation in some of these towns is suggested by a few well-attested facts about particular localities.

In town A, one person in fourteen belonged to the church and six in fourteen to the Grange.

B, a small center, had not a single church-member, the members of its very small church all living in the country.

An illustrated lecture at C was well attended. The lecturer asked if the place had strong churches. The answer was, that the only church-members were two women, neither of whom would attend a service at which the other was to be present.

In many of these places church services were not missed or desired. Neighboring ministers sometimes took difficult trips to hold services at which only a very few persons were present. Regarding D, for example, a volunteer preacher reported after his first service, "If there had been forty-seven more present there would have been fifty." The next Sunday he said, "If there had been ninety-eight more there would have been a hundred." In E, though minister after minister had been sent there to preach by the denominational superintendent, the people were utterly indifferent to all such efforts in their behalf. In some of these underprivileged towns crime and immorality were reported to be frequent.

The eighty-two towns we have just been considering did not monopolize the country districts with few church-members. In the counties surveyed, it will be remembered, not only did the open-country districts in general have a low proportion of church-members, but the country districts of almost all towns were poorly enlisted. Exceptionally poor enlistment was found in certain kinds of situations. In districts where some of the Protestants had been replaced by French-Canadian Roman

Catholics, the Protestant churches were liable to be weak, having lost both supporters and leadership. Certain towns with federated churches in a village had poor enlistment in the country. Towns with several small centers each with a church, the churches being in many cases of different denominations, did not always have church programs and preachers adapted to enlist large proportions of the people. Districts where a country church had been closed had sometimes few church-members, the surviving church families not having been transferred to another church.

COMPETITION

In Vermont, where the most common kind of unit in the original social pattern had been the small center, which commonly had two or more churches, and the population of which had declined, the outstanding problem of the religious leaders was competition. Much had already been done toward the elimination of competition where the churches competing were in the same small center. But many cases of competition of this kind still remained, especially in villages. Even in the three counties surveyed, eight of the twelve centers with 250 to 1,000 inhabitants had more than one Protestant church, and five of the eight contained pairs of churches of denominations that in other communities had combined their forces.

Another kind of competition is still more frequent. Small neighboring communities, often within a single town, have each its church or churches; and these are more frequently than not of different denominations. The centers are as a rule only from one to four miles apart; and where the topography allows, the time and effort required for going from one to another has been considerably lessened by the grading and graveling of roads and by the use of motor cars. The town, always the unit for purposes of government, has become a more significant entity of late, since the care of town roads has become an important function, and since school affairs have come to be organized on a town basis. At the same time, the shrinkage of population in the small centers has weakened the churches.

Competition among churches in different communities of the same town is illustrated in one of the towns of Orange County. In the northern part of the town is a center where there had originally been two churches, Universalist and Baptist, but where the Universalist church had been inactive for years. A mile and a half to the south was another center with a Congregational church. Two miles farther, toward the southern boundary of

the town, was a country neighborhood with a Methodist church. The churches were all on or very near the fine graveled highway passing along a valley through the town. The people belonged in part to the church within their own community, in part to churches in other communities within the town and even beyond its limits. The centrally located hamlet, for instance, had twenty-two residents belonging to churches. Only four of them belonged to the local Congregational church. Seven were members of the Baptist church in the hamlet to the north; two to the country Methodist church to the south; seven belonged to a Roman Catholic church outside the town in one direction, and the remaining two to a Methodist church in the opposite direction.

There was talk of uniting the churches; but serious obstacles stood in the way. These did not consist of doctrinal differences, which were largely things of the past, but concerned local rivalries, inherited grudges, the personality of leaders, and loyalty to individual churches rich in old associations. Moreover, outside the main valley the town was intersected by hills which divided it into many neighborhoods. Back roads were poor, and many farm families were still dependent on horses for transportation. But the forces of change were at work.

Denominational competition on a town basis was present in all but three of the seventeen towns of Orange County. Two of the three exceptions had each two churches of the same denomination. The third, a small town, where all the year-round families lived in a very limited section, had a federated church. Sometimes the topography was such that competition prevailed among churches not in the same town, but in the edges of two or more neighboring towns. Small churches are in many cases enabled to prolong separate existence because of the possession of income-bearing funds. The division of church-members among several churches helps to explain the small average size of the churches in hamlets and in the country, and suggests a probable explanation of the failure of the churches to provide service adapted to enlist larger proportions of the people.

INTERDENOMINATIONAL POLICIES

The two kinds of poorly enlisted localities—those with very inadequate church ministry and those with crippling competition—have long been labored over by denominational officials acting in coöperation.

Lessening Competition

For more than thirty-five years successive interdenominational agencies have worked toward the elimination of competition within communities through the withdrawal, federation and consolidation of churches. Forty federated churches were reported in Vermont by the Religious Census of 1926, and several other federations were formed in the next few years.

The progress that had been made by 1929 is well illustrated in the three counties surveyed. At the beginning of the century competing churches had been present in ten villages and twenty-five hamlets. In the villages, five churches had been closed and five pairs or groups of churches had been united. Thereby competition had been completely eliminated in two of the villages, and had been lessened in four others.

As for the twenty-five hamlets, churches had been closed in sixteen; in eight, two or more churches had united; in two places both processes had taken place. In consequence, competition had been entirely done away in all but three of the hamlets; and even in these three places there was no case of competition between two churches, active the year round, that represented any two of the denominations commonly entering into unions. The denominational superintendents hoped that if they could persuade churches to federate at the prevailing number per year, all serious cases of competition within communities in the state would be eliminated by 1917.¹⁸

Improving Service to Poorly Enlisted Districts

The coöperating officials also endeavor to provide better church ministry for poorly served communities. In their periodic consultations they go over a list of towns inadequately served, and try to plan for improved ministry. They employ several methods. Churches of different denominations in neighboring communities are in some cases yoked under a common minister. Single communities, or districts composed of several adjoining communities, which have had very weak churches and no resident minister, have been allocated to one or another denomination, which has put in a resident man partly supported by home-mission aid. Four such enterprises were found in the three counties surveyed, each conducted by a different denomination.

Through a survival of the old-time "itinerant" system, some very weak churches are sent a summer worker, often a theological student, who frequently preaches at two centers, the churches of

¹⁸ A fuller account of the long interdenominational campaign against church competition is given in Appendix IV.

which are in some cases of different denominations, and who also conducts church vacation schools. At least nine towns in the state have such service in summer at one or more points, and no religious ministry at any point during the rest of the year. Some localities have had no service except in summer for many years. In the cases encountered during the survey, these summer services enlisted only a small proportion of the people of the towns served; and in places thus served for several summers, the proportion did not show much if any increase. Some denominational officials considered such work helpful; others thought it the best that could be done with the money at their disposal; and still others declared it to be worse than nothing at all. The results obtained were believed to vary with the qualifications of the worker.

Indirect Attack on Town-Wide Competition

Against town-wide competition no open campaign was being waged in 1929. But the units of a certain federated church, instead of being in the same centers, as usual, were in neighboring communities of the same town. And the system of allocating neighboring communities to one denomination and of providing such areas with a single resident minister was adapted indirectly to amalgamate the people concerned, as was also the less formal yoking of churches of different denominations under one minister.

Home-Mission Aid

Another form of interdenominational coöperation practiced in Vermont consists in refraining from giving home-mission aid to competing churches within the same small community. Very few such cases existed in 1929 in the whole state, so far as the denominations coöperating were concerned; and these were under peculiar circumstances, and the aid was soon to be withdrawn. In the counties surveyed twenty-three hamlet churches and five country churches received a total of \$7,475 from five denominations. In none of these places was the church receiving aid in the same community with another Protestant church. This did occur, however, in four of the larger centers. In the most striking instance, a small church in a village of about 2,000 inhabitants received an annual grant of \$1,300, although the community had four other Protestant churches, two of which, as well as the aided church, belonged to coöperating denominations.

Though competition within small centers was considered a reason against home-mission grants, however, competition on a

town basis was not taken into account. None of the churches aided was alone in its town. What is more, in the three counties in question alone, each of five towns had in different small centers two churches aided by different denominations. In a sixth town, which had a population of six or seven hundred, churches in three hamlets not far apart received from three denominations a total of \$975 a year.

The home-mission aid granted by each of the five denominations was almost invariably dispensed in driblets. To this rule, however, there were several exceptions. One of the allocated fields, for example, was receiving \$1,200 a year. The principle of equality of religious opportunity, moreover, had not been accepted as an ideal.

A very few experiments that were given the name of larger parishes were being made, in spite of the serious difficulties presented by topographical barriers.

The interdenominational coöperation practiced in Vermont was notable in several ways. Vermont was among the states in which coöperation among denominational officials was adopted comparatively early. The membership of the denominations coöperating constituted nearly three-fourths of the Protestant church-members of the state; so that united measures could be applied in a large field. The superintendents, at periodical conferences, took a comprehensive view of all competitive situations in which their denominations were concerned, and of all poorly served rural districts in the state, and discussed each local situation in the light of their combined knowledge. They had actually accomplished the elimination of competition within many small communities and were continuing their efforts in this direction. On the other hand, interdenominational coöperation had not made much progress in eliminating competition among small neighboring communities, or in providing for underprivileged towns types of religious ministry adapted effectually to enlist the people in churches.

LOCAL CHURCHES AND THOSE OUTSIDE THEIR PARISHES

Many of the old churches, especially where population has not changed in character, have inherited along with beautiful church buildings groups of families who for generations have furnished active and responsible leaders in church work. The Methodist church in Williamstown, for example, during its long history, has had four families each of which furnished church leaders in

that community for four generations, besides several other families that provided leaders for two or three generations.¹⁹

A few churches with strong leadership, often inherited, make efforts to serve all the people within reach. Such ministries observed during the survey included a community Christmas tree, district visiting, the sending of birthday cards, and the effort to draw the children of families not connected with the parishes into church vacation schools. Besides, the five churches of one town, in five different hamlets and of two different denominations, had a joint council which divided the town into districts, for each of which one of the churches was given responsibility.

Attempts to serve the community in a broad way, however, were few and were usually transitory. For the most part, the churches considered their function to be service to their own parishes, a point of view that is common where churches of different denominations have long held the field. Light on the attitude of some churches toward their environment is afforded by an episode at a conference of the Commission on Religious Forces connected with the Comprehensive Survey of Vermont. One of the speakers, in relation to a certain county where villages with large churches were near poorly enlisted country districts, suggested that these churches institute a campaign in which each church family should adopt a friendly relationship with a few country families. This suggestion was received in dead silence, although representatives of some of the churches were present. Finally the minister of one of those churches was persuaded to speak. He said, "The people would not carry out the plan, for two reasons. The laymen are not whole-heartedly Christian; and the community does not accept them as Christian." Gloom settled on the conference, and with reason; and yet after all both the people in the churches and those outside of them had a lofty ideal of what the word "Christian" should mean.

Trends

Though rural population continues to decrease slowly in Vermont, agriculture there is prosperous, and agricultural extension officials believe that the progressive increase in the demand for milk as the accessible cities grow larger may eventually justify the appropriation of a more extended acreage for dairying. The amount of property owned by summer people is growing, as is the number of tourists that visit the state annually.

¹⁹ Data from W. M. Davenport, *One Hundred and Twenty-five Years of Methodism in Williamstown*, 1929, chapter VII.

In consequence, the services rendered to vacationists have an increasing economic importance. The resources of the second-growth woods are made available by many sawmills and wood-working factories. The quarries of marble and granite are prosperous, and the supply of these stones is abundant. The towns and small cities of the state, and many of the smaller centers as well, have thriving industrial plants. Moderate prosperity seems secure, and may possibly show a gradual increase.

Highways are being steadily improved. The development of the hill roads may be stimulated by the influence of the summer people, who are fond of hilltop views. Improvement of the back roads would facilitate the revival of agriculture in fertile districts now handicapped by isolation. On the other hand, districts not so well adapted to dairy farming are given over more and more to forest.

As roads are improved, the shrinkage of small centers is likely to increase; and the transfer of functions to larger places, accompanied by the weakening of the institutions of small communities, may well progress further. To what extent these tendencies will be impeded by the hilly topography cannot be foreseen.

Decreasing constituencies and declining influence of the churches in small centers may well bring about an augmented impetus toward the union of churches not only within the same community, but in neighboring interrelated communities. Whether the combination of forces and of resources will result in enlisting larger proportions of the people of the small centers and open-country districts, cannot be conjectured in ignorance of the measure of intelligence, coöperation, and energy that will be applied to the problems involved.

SUMMARY

From the beginning, Vermont churches have been the object of concern. Planted by devoted efforts and kept alive at the price of unsleeping vigilance, they at several periods, as the course of history changed their environment, required adjustment to new conditions through concerted action on a large scale. Competition among churches in small communities with decreasing populations has through interdenominational coöperation been alleviated in many cases by union or withdrawal. But new environmental changes have lessened the pull of home institutions and have rendered the competition of churches in neighboring communities more appreciable.

Furthermore, many country people, those of country districts

in general, but especially those in isolated towns, have very little contact with churches and small desire for their ministrations. The problem of adjusting the churches to their changing environment still confronts the religious leaders.

OLD HILLY AREAS OUTSIDE VERMONT

In topography, agricultural conditions, highway development, and resort situation, Vermont is typical of the Northeastern Highlands, which include also the Adirondack section of New York, the Berkshire country of western Massachusetts, most of New Hampshire, and western Maine. That the church situation in Vermont is also typical of that found in the other parts of the Northeastern Highlands is supported by several pieces of testimony.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Regarding the church situation in New Hampshire, evidence is provided by the report of an Every Community Survey of that state made in 1928 by the Council of Churches of Christ in New Hampshire in coöperation with the national Home Missions Council. Thirty-three towns were classified as "inadequately churchied." These towns were situated in nine of the ten counties, almost all being in the hilly part of the state; and in 1920 they had 9,753 inhabitants. The churches of these towns, which numbered twenty-six, were either dormant or were active for only part of the year. In addition, ninety-six neighborhoods in towns having churches were reported as "religiously neglected."²⁰ Poorly enlisted districts were evidently numerous in New Hampshire.

WESTERN MAINE

A survey similar to that made in New Hampshire was made in Maine, beginning in the spring of 1929. The published report gives facts and figures from which it appears that the four hilliest counties of Maine had fifty towns which either had no churches in 1929, or had churches so distributed, so little ministerial service, or seasons of activity so short, that the territory, in the opinion of those making the survey, was inadequately served. These towns, though individually small and sparsely settled, contained a total population of 14,662. The people were Protestant in preference, as towns without Protestant churches

²⁰ Morse and Burnham, *Every Community Survey of New Hampshire* (New York; Home Missions Council, 1928). Data from pages 8, 18 and 29.

where the people were Roman Catholic were not included in the enumeration.²¹

THE ADIRONDACK SECTION

On the other side of Vermont among the Adirondack Mountains of New York State, Miss Marjorie Patten found similar conditions in 1921. She wrote:

Much territory is not included within the parish of any church, especially among the mountains. . . . Two entire townships were absolutely neglected during the winter. . . . There are three communities . . . having neither church service nor Sunday schools. . . . One-third of Warren County's churches have fewer than twenty-five members.²²

Outside the Northeastern Highlands country districts with few church-members in proportion to population are found in several other hilly sections of the longer-settled part of the United States.

SOUTHEASTERN OHIO

In the hilly counties of southeastern Ohio the topography affects the church situation not only by separating the people into small isolated communities, but also through economic and social barriers between the richer farmers of the more productive districts and the poorer farmers of marginal districts. The situation of the churches of hilly country of two distinct types, both in southeastern Ohio, is well explained by Roderick Peattie in the *Geography of Ohio* as follows:

Within the hill counties, however, there are decided contrasts. Where valleys are broad, as along the Scioto or Muskingum, or where hilltops are extensive and fertile, as in Columbiana County, there is a strong economic distinction between the farmers of the flat land and of the slopes. In the south half of the river counties, Adams, Scioto, Lawrence, Gallia, Meigs, and Athens, the distinction between the rich farmers and the poor farmers is not only economic but decidedly social. . . . The differentiation is best seen in the center of rural social organization, the country church. The people in these counties who support the churches are those living on farms of 100 to 150 acres. Those on small farms where crop growing is difficult have barely enough to feed and clothe themselves, and have little for church support. Hence they do not attend the churches of the rich farmers but form temporary organizations which in many cases are poorly administered by emotional preachers who do not hold their congregations.

In Monroe, Belmont, Jefferson, Carroll, and Columbiana counties

²¹ Data from *Every Community Survey of Maine* (New York; Home Missions Council, 1930), pp. 39, 40, 61, 62.

²² *The Country Church in Colonial Counties* (New York; Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1922), pp. 36, 66 and 67.

the countryside does not have the bottom lands, with the exception of the Ohio Valley, and the streams are encased in deep, steep-sided valleys. Between the hilltops and the brink of the valleys are broad, fertile shelves, occupying, in Columbiana County, one-third of the territory. It is here that the better farming communities exist. In the valleys are farms on which a little patch of flood plain or steep slope is cultivated. Not only is there the difference in wealth of the two types but the 300-foot wall of the valley stands as a definite barrier against intercourse. In Coshocton, Muskingum, and Morgan counties the better farms are either on the flat hilltops or on the valley bottoms of the Muskingum and its tributaries and the poorer society is on the steeper slopes. In Hocking County about the little town of South Bloomingville there are distinct groups of small farmers in the valleys and on the hilltops, the difference in elevation being 300 feet. Separate and parallel roads serve the valleys and the ridge lands. Each community may have its own store, school, and church. Vinton County is all slope, which condition isolates groups from each other but does not create class distinctions. Where the glacial plain abuts the escarpment of the plateau, as in Fairfield County, there is a still more decided contrast in the two societies.²³

THE SOUTHERN APPALACHIANS

The Southern Appalachians, too, have what are there popularly called "dark corners," where the influence of the church and other social organizations barely penetrates. In two counties surveyed by the Institute of Social and Religious Research in 1921, one in Tennessee and the other in Alabama, a number of such districts were identified.

THE OZARK-OUACHITA HIGHLANDS

A survey of ninety-nine counties in the Ozark Mountains of Arkansas and Missouri, made in 1929 and 1930 by Mr. Charles T. Greenway for the Home Missions Council, affords evidence of the existence in that section of much rural territory having low proportions of church-members.²⁴ Twenty-two rural counties had less than a quarter of the people in the church-membership. Seventeen counties had less than a fifth, and seven had one-seventh or less. There were no churches in 110 of the 1,266 townships covered by the study; and these churchless townships had a total population of over 46,000.

Country districts with few church-members, in short, are found not only in the various parts of the Northeastern Highlands, but in every other important hilly section of the eastern United States.

²³ Roderick Peattie, *Geography of Ohio* (Columbus; 1923), pp. 58, 59.

²⁴ A report of this survey is to be published by the National Home Missions Council.

Chapter III

OLD LEVEL AREAS

Three contiguous counties in central Ohio were chosen for survey because it was believed that, so far as the situation of the country churches was concerned, they were typical of much of the level country in the older parts of the United States.

These counties form a district of 1,400 square miles. Since Ohio forms the main bridge between the northern Atlantic states and the Middle West, this district lies on or near national highways of commerce. It has excellent roads and other means of communication, and the remarkably level contour presents no barriers to easy passage from one part to another.

The counties are over a century and a half old, have well-developed institutions and facilities, are abundantly prosperous, and have from forty to fifty inhabitants per square mile. Towns, villages and hamlets are numerous. Even in the open country there is an average of four farms to the square mile. These counties, nevertheless, contain open-country districts where there are very few church-members.

ENVIRONMENT

The whole district is level and open. The region of which it forms a part was scraped flat long ago by the glaciers of the age of ice. Considerable districts, too, were once covered by glacial lakes, the sediment of which left them as flat as a floor. The only irregularities of surface are near the streams and are but slight. The extremely level character of the land may be appreciated by comparing the contour lines in Diagram XIII with those in Diagram IX, page 25, which shows typical contour of the Old Hilly areas. Relief from the general flatness is afforded, however, by frequent groves of hardwood trees. Save for these groves, the aspect of the country is one of almost uninterrupted fields and pastures, dotted with large farmhouses, which with their big barns and silos and their lawns, gardens and big trees, form prominent and attractive features of the landscape.

Conditions are unusually favorable for agriculture. The glaciers, besides making the land so conveniently level, laid on a fertile and well-mixed soil to a depth that is often more than

a hundred feet. There is almost no waste land. The annual precipitation is from thirty-six to thirty-nine inches, much of which falls in spring and summer. And the growing season lasts from five and a half months to nearly six.

DEVELOPMENT

The earliest settlers, who arrived shortly before 1800, found a large part of the country covered with forests of hardwood trees. Some of the rest was in prairie, and a considerable part in swamps. To fit the land for crops required long years of struggle similar to that carried on in earlier generations east of the Alleghany Mountains. Facilities were still lacking for the work; and the settlers were in constant danger from Indians and wild beasts, and were without easy access to bases of supplies. Nevertheless, little cabins, mills, schools and churches were speedily erected; and by the end of 1810 all three counties had been organized.

At first the farmers had all they could do to feed and clothe themselves and their families. When the initial difficulties had been overcome and the rich lands produced a surplus, this had to be disposed of in a form that could walk to market. The farmers therefore fed their grain to cattle and turkeys, and drove them eastward over the Alleghany Mountains.

The need of means of communication was already evident. Providing them was for several generations an important part of the long struggle to develop the facilities of civilization. Through this district in very early days passed "Zane's Trace," which traversed the forests from Wheeling to the Ohio River at a point in the southwestern part of the state. This was at first a mere track, but later it was developed so as to have ferries across the streams and corduroy roads at the wettest spots. For forty years this was the main highway in that part of Ohio.

In 1825 the Ohio Stage Coach Company was started. Five years later the first graveled highway was constructed, the invention being locally credited to an inhabitant of the district included in this study. In 1832 the Ohio Canal was completed up to a point within the district, and provided all-water communication with the Atlantic seaboard through Lake Erie and the Erie Canal.

The epoch-making national highway from Wheeling westward, originally paved with stone, reached the district in 1836, furnishing not only infinitely improved access to markets but much lucrative occupation in the way of inn-keeping and stage-driving.

This was followed in the next few years by several other turn-pikes. Railways arrived in 1848 and 1857.

Through these avenues produce was more and more readily transported to market. This tended toward the development of farms, as did also the invention of farm machinery. In addition, one of the three counties conducted, from 1856 on, monthly live-stock sales attended by farmers and dealers from a wide area; and another, which had light soil suitable for vegetables, developed a canning industry.

Population steadily increased till 1890. The original settlers came from farther east—especially from Pennsylvania, New York and New England. Later on many Germans settled in the district.

CONDITIONS IN 1900

About the year 1900 the district was primarily a land of prosperous agriculture. Situated in the eastern edge of the rich Corn Belt, it produced large quantities of corn and hogs, with wheat and other grains, cattle and horses. Farms occupied almost every corner outside the towns and villages. In one of the three counties, indeed, they covered 98.7 per cent. of the area. Many of the farmers lived in big three-story brick houses with verandas, lawns and gardens, and had huge barns.

For some years the more prosperous farmers had invested their profits in additional farm land. This they let to tenants, many of whom worked it on shares. They also hired farm laborers to help them. Nearly 45,000 people, chiefly farmers and farm laborers with their families, lived outside the incorporated centers, or thirty-two persons to the square mile.

To serve this countryside, each county had a county-seat town and several villages and hamlets, the entire district having nineteen incorporated centers, in which lived something over one-third of the population.

The nearly two-thirds of the people living outside these centers could not reach them easily. Many were dependent on unimproved dirt roads, which after the frequent rains were first muddy and then rutted; and the usual means of conveyance was the deliberate horse and buggy. At the nearest hamlet or village, sometimes even at a country crossroads, in either case only a few miles away, the farmers got their mail and bought their supplies and much of their clothing. Their children attended ungraded neighborhood schools. Life went on within a very small circle; and few interests carried the farmers outside it.

The neighborhood church was the center, not only of moral

and religious instruction, but of social life. Of open-country churches the three Ohio counties had in 1900 not fewer than seventy-five. These churches formed an essential part of a social pattern composed of many small units each largely self-sufficing.

CHANGES SINCE 1900

At or about the turn of the century many changes began to operate. In 1901 the district gained an interurban electric railway, which gave new freedom of movement to the people near its line of track.

ROADS AND CARS

Highway development was first undertaken by the state of Ohio in 1904, somewhat later than in Vermont. Intensive work on the roads of the particular counties studied was locally reported to have begun about 1913. The task was facilitated by several factors. The counties were small, the areas averaging only 467 miles; and the county seats were approximately in the middle.

Since most of the area was originally not "Congress lands," where roads run at right angles, but part of the Virginia Military Reservation, which was not surveyed as a whole in advance of settlement, the roads, coming into existence where they were needed, radiated in every direction from the county seats to the smaller centers. From one of the county seats seventeen roads, either directly or as branches of primary highways, extend to the most distant corners of the county.

By 1928 the roads were almost invariably good. Of the 602 miles of road in one of the counties, for example, eighty-five were paved and five hundred were graveled; only seventeen miles were dirt roads.

Of the 5,400 and more farms in the three counties in 1925, nine out of ten were on surfaced roads. These roads, moreover, are not affected by rain or snow. Cars are used all winter.

And most of the country people have cars. A recent survey of the relations of the farmers with the towns, made by Dr. Perry H. Denune in one of the counties under consideration, discovered that cars were owned by seven-eighths of the 167 families investigated.¹ Excluding laborers' families, 93.7 per cent. of the farmers had cars. The improved roads and the general use of automobiles were indispensable to most of the other changes now to be described, and facilitated them all.

¹ Denune, *The Social and Economic Relations of the Farmers with the Towns in Pickaway County, Ohio, 1927*, p. 32.

RURAL FREE DELIVERY

A second innovation since the beginning of the century was the rural free delivery of mail. In 1900 the Official Postal Guide listed for the three counties surveyed sixty-four post offices that were outside centers of more than 250 inhabitants and no rural delivery routes. Only ten of the post offices remained in 1928, more than five-sixths thus having disappeared in the interim. On the other hand, fifty-eight mail routes had been introduced, which made a net-work all over the districts.

Rural delivery affects country life in several ways. For one thing, the farmer is no longer obliged to make frequent trips to the neighborhood store to call for his mail. Purchases he formerly made while there are curtailed. The social contacts with neighbors at the store, while waiting for mail to be distributed, have come to an end. Again, the parcel-post service by rural carriers makes possible the purchase of many articles from mail-order houses.

Then, too, the general stores of the neighborhoods have been seriously crippled. They have lost their income from the former fourth-class post offices; and their custom has been diminished through the much rarer visits of the farmers and the competition of mail-order houses. Some country stores have gone out of business entirely, and others have limited their stock to groceries, gasoline, and such other wares as are required by families of laborers.

Finally, in losing his local post office, the farmer has lost his neighborhood address. His residence is no longer Grassy Point or Sugar Creek, but Route 6 from the county-seat or one of the next larger centers. This tends to make him think of himself as attached to the larger place, especially as no hills set a visible and obstructive boundary to his home community.

CONSOLIDATION OF SCHOOLS

A fourth change in the district has been the consolidation of schools. This began on a large scale about 1915. By 1928 considerable progress had been made, the amount varying in the different counties. Unification of two degrees was present. When all the schools of a township were combined in one, the result was called a "centralized" school. When any smaller number were united, the result was a "consolidated" school.

In one of the three counties, eighteen of the thirty-four schools outside the county seat were either centralized or consolidated. In the second county, the schools of four of the twelve townships

had been centralized, and there were in addition a good many cases of consolidation. In the third county, the schools of twelve of the fifteen townships had been centralized, and some consolidation had taken place in two of the others. In only one township had there been no unions.

The unified schools, especially those that had been centralized, have several important effects. To begin with, they form a common interest for all the people concerned. This interest is in a vital subject, and the new school is something of which they can all be proud. In connection with many of these schools Parent Teacher associations have been formed, in which the people work together to provide hot lunches, books and other improvements.

Again, the new building forms a common meeting place. Here assemble local branches of the farm bureau and the home bureau, the 4-H clubs and the pig and canning clubs, and also the community club when there is one. Some of these groups unite the people of several country neighborhoods and small centers.

Moreover, the children are getting a better education than their parents received in the ungraded country schools, and are more likely to go on to high school. They also grow up among the children of a much larger area, and they acquire the habit of going to the point where the school is. This is in a village, if the township has one conveniently located for all the inhabitants; otherwise it is in the country.

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION

All three counties had county agents and home-demonstration agents; and local farm-bureau groups have been organized in the various rural sections for men, women, and children. To these groups many farm families belong. In one county 252 families are enrolled; in another 800 or 900 persons are members.

The extension activities tend to change the life of country people in several ways. The addresses, printed information and personal advice, with such services as cow-testing, demonstration plots and the like, make the farmers more efficient, and thus increase their prosperity. Home-bureau meetings help to raise the standard of living of the farm women. All these activities bring to the country men, women, and children intellectual stimulus and a widened horizon. The various meetings provide social contacts that are frequently of township extent. They accustom the country people to work on committees and to speak in public. And they unite the local units in a county organization with headquarters at the county seat.

FARMERS' COÖPERATIVES

The district has also several farmers' coöperatives, each designed to market some one product, such as grain, live stock, milk or vegetables. One of the county agents said that his county had a live-stock coöperative that was the best in the state, adding that it needed no leadership from extension advisors. Such activities train the farmers in business methods, accustom them to working in large groups, and give them new standards of efficiency.

GROWING INDUSTRIALISM

Though the district lies outside the industrial section of Ohio, it is somewhat affected in several ways by industrialism. The county-seat towns and a few of the larger villages have factories, which manufacture cast iron, metal products, garments, canned vegetables or other articles. Most of the workers live near their work; but some have homes in small hamlets where living is cheap, and go to the factories in automobiles or buses. Some residents of the centers nearest Columbus commute to the state capital, where they work in factories or offices.

CENTRALIZATION OF SERVICES

Many needs of the country people that were once met close at home, so far as they were met at all, are now provided for in the villages and towns. Most of the doctors, lawyers and veterinaries, for example, now live in the larger centers.

This is particularly true of stores. While the neighborhood stores, as has been said, have either disappeared or have limited their stock of goods, the larger places have come to have stores specializing in the various kinds of merchandise, and offering the customer considerable variety of choice. One of the towns even boasts a department store. The larger places also have chain stores and ten-cent stores. Every farm is within easy reach, over level, surfaced roads, of several of these centers; and Columbus is readily accessible either by car, or by train, bus or interurban electric. The choice of shopping centers is governed in some cases by motives of economy and in others by considerations of taste or fashion. Most families buy goods at a number of different centers.

The marketing of farm produce is also done at the centers; and here, again, a given farmer carries his grain or stock where it is most convenient or where he can make the best terms, often marketing his various products at different points, and changing the points from year to year.

Amusements are also centralized. The moving-pictures and shows most largely attended are those at the county seats, where on Saturday afternoon and evening gather most of the farm families; visiting their town friends, shopping, talking on the sidewalks and in the park, and frequenting the moving-picture theatres and dance halls.

Membership in social organizations, outside of those specifically for farm people, is largely in town or village organizations. Even some of the granges are centered in villages. Membership in the lodges and other societies is largely confined to the more prosperous farmers. "If a farmer can make a good appearance," the investigator was told, "he can be in anything."

CHANGES IN POPULATION

Where so much else has changed it is only to be expected that there would be readjustments of population. The total population of the district, to be sure, has altered but little since it reached its peak in 1890. It remained about the same from 1890 to 1900, and between that date and 1920 showed a decline of only 3.4 per cent.

Within the area, however, opposite tendencies have been operating in the larger centers, on the one hand, and in the open country on the other. The population of the three county-seat towns had increased more than one-sixth, and that of the villages of more than 1,000 inhabitants, about one-fifth. Such increases are natural in view of the progressive industrialization and the centralizing of services in the larger centers.

Of the smaller incorporated centers some gained and some lost; but the net result for these places was a decline of 6 per cent. Moreover, during the same score of years the population of unincorporated territory declined about one-eighth.

To this decline several tendencies contributed. The greater efficiency of the farmers, together with increased use of farm machinery, lessened the number of men required for the work of agriculture. At the same time the good pay and other attractions of work in factories and offices drew away some of the children of farmers. The number of farms gradually declined, so that out of every seven farms existing in 1900 only six were left in 1925.

The reduction came about partly through the discarding of about one-twentieth of the land that had been in farms in 1900, most of the change coming between 1920 and 1925, and partly through an increase in the average size of farms from 135 to 149 acres.

The loss, however, was slight. Nine-tenths of the area was still in farms in 1925; and there was an average of four farms to the square mile, and a farm population of twenty persons to the square mile. Yet it is significant that the proportion of the population residing in incorporated centers increased in the twenty years, if only by six or seven points, while the proportion in unincorporated area decreased to correspond.

INCREASING INTELLIGENCE OF COUNTRY PEOPLE

Many factors in the changed environment tend to stimulate intellectual activity on the part of the country people. The mere fact that good roads and cars lengthen the radius of the familiar world, serves to widen the horizon of the farm families and gives them new and contrasting matters to think and talk about. Since the coming of the rural mail carrier, more families subscribe to daily papers and magazines. The children bring home facts and ideas from the fine consolidated schools. The veterans of the World War acquired new points of view during their period of service. Stimulating social contacts, formal and informal, are multiplied through the telephone and the family automobile. The farmer takes part in the councils not only of the coöperative and of the local unit of the farm bureau, but of the town lodges and chambers of commerce; and his wife finds new channels for self-expression in the home bureau and the Parent Teacher Association. Finally, moving-pictures and above all the radio make familiar the doings and the issues of the world at large.

INCREASING SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

Although no formidable social barrier separates the people of the country from those of the larger centers, and though there are almost no immigrants, the percentage of foreign-born being less than 1 per cent., yet social stratification has been increased since the beginning of the twentieth century by three different tendencies. In the first place, for some thirty years families from the hills of Kentucky have been slowly coming into the district. They are said to be comparatively poor and ignorant, and to have become laborers or tenants. Some have found homes in the drab little hamlets; others live in the larger centers, where they are spoken of as forming a slum element.

Again, tenancy has slowly increased, both in relative frequency and in social importance. In twenty-five years the per cent. of tenancy for the district as a whole has risen three and a half

points. In 1925 members of tenant families constituted more than half the farm population. Moreover, nearly three-fourths of the tenant farmers, instead of being in the comparatively independent position of those paying a cash rent, were farming on shares, whereas in 1900 less than three-fifths had been share-tenants.

Owners commonly pick out the tenants that they can get on cheapest terms, and those most readily controlled. Many of the tenants take their children from school when they have completed the eighth grade; and even of those in this grade considerable numbers apply for working certificates. They are therefore unable, in the words of one of the school superintendents, "to fit in anywhere except into the activities connected with the soil"; so that tenancy frequently passes from father to son. Many of these tenants are poor, ill-dressed and unshaven. They would not be at home in social relations; and they are the less likely to enter such relations because they frequently move from farm to farm, their migrations often taking them into other communities.

In some sections a large part of the land is owned by a few families, some of whom live in the larger centers or even outside the district in Columbus or elsewhere. In one instance a large estate has been handled by trustees for non-resident heirs for several generations. In districts where the bulk of the families are share-tenants of the ignorant, thriftless and irresponsible variety, frequently drifting about, the local institutions naturally suffer.

Social stratification is being intensified in still another way. The farm families that are coming to share in town and village activities, are the more prosperous, intelligent and enterprising. The poorer country families, including most of those of laborers and share-tenants, are almost entirely left out. The secession of the leaders meanwhile curtails activities in the open country, with the exception of those associated with the schools and the farm-bureau groups of various kinds.

DECLINE OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Throughout this brief account of changes since 1900 have appeared signs of the passing of the former social pattern, consisting of many small and almost self-sufficing neighborhoods. The neighborhood has lost its post office, its general store, its doctor, its blacksmith shop, its school and even its local address. Cars on good roads take the farmers to larger centers to buy their supplies, to market their produce, to seek amusement and

to satisfy their social instincts. The old social pattern is a thing of the past.

WHAT NEW SOCIAL PATTERN IS EMERGING?

A new pattern is in process of formation. What it is to be cannot be fully determined. Three somewhat inconsistent tendencies are evident. The first is the centralization of services in centers. The second is a dawning community consciousness in some districts having centralized schools. The third is the growing habit of country people to seek services in several different communities. A farmer may easily market in three centers, make his purchases in these and a few more, send his children to high school in one, belong to a lodge in another, and seek his recreation in half a dozen different ones, giving preference to the county seat. Relationships, being divided, are weak; and they are less personal than in the days of the cohesive, self-contained neighborhood. They are also more apt to be on a purely commercial basis. Though services have become focused in comparatively few points, the interests of many country families have been diffused, and the interests of the share-tenants and laborers have been curtailed.

THE CHURCH SITUATION

The visitor to any one of these Ohio counties sees many church buildings: neat and attractive little churches all over the countryside; and in the larger centers many imposing and modern-looking edifices. There was in 1928, indeed, a church for every nine square miles. About half the families of the district were connected with some church; and approximately a quarter of the inhabitants were members of the churches, take the county as a whole. But whereas more than a third of the inhabitants of the towns and of most of the larger villages were in the churches, the proportions for the inhabitants of the smaller centers were lower; and of the people living in the open country only one-sixth or little more were church-members.²

DISTRICTS WITH FEW CHURCH-MEMBERS

Some country districts had even less than one-sixth of the people in the churches. In fact, the proportion of church-members in the open-country parts of fifteen of the thirty-nine townships in the three counties fell below 15 per cent. In these fifteen districts lived 13,833 persons, one-fifth of all the inhabi-

² For percentages, see Appendix II, Table II.

tants of the three counties, and two-fifths of the people living in the open country.

Of these country districts with less than 15 per cent. of the people in churches, three surround the county-seat towns, and one adjoins one of the larger villages. On the other hand, some are as far away from the larger centers as the small dimensions of the counties allow; and in each county, in 1928, the open-country parts of two or three townships had lower proportions than the townships containing the county seats. Three districts had high proportions of tenants among the farmers. Two had had a long history of poor church life. All but two had closed churches in or very near them; but closed churches were pretty generally distributed.

Three of the country districts in question had less than 10 per cent. of the people in churches. Only three had more than 30 per cent., and no township had in its open-country districts as high a proportion as 35 per cent. One of the three townships with highest ratios had many Amish Mennonites, who had three churches in or near the township. Another had many families of German stock, and had large Lutheran, United Brethren and Methodist churches in village and country. The third had a strong country Methodist church with a community program.

Five small centers of 250 inhabitants or fewer also had less than 15 per cent. of the people in the churches. The inhabitants of these places were mainly laborers and their families.

CLOSED CHURCHES

Of 178 churches that were active in the three counties in 1916, thirty-two had been closed before the fall of 1928. Since four other churches, organized since 1916, had also been closed, a total of thirty-six churches ceased their activities during the twelve years.

Twenty-three of the closed churches were in the open country and seven were in very small centers, only six being in the larger villages, and none being in the county-seat towns. The closing of churches is distinctly a phenomenon of the country. Closed churches are sprinkled over the whole area, being present in nearly every township, and being found both near the larger centers and away from them.

At least half of these closed churches, sixteen, had been in existence fifty years or more; and at least twelve, seventy-five years or longer. They represented ten different denominations, the largest number, eleven, being Methodist Episcopal.

The rate at which churches were abandoned was increasing. In all the years before 1916 only twenty churches, of which buildings or other distinct vestiges remained, had been abandoned; whereas in the twelve years thereafter the number closed, as has been said, was thirty-six. Moreover, between 1916 and 1923 an average of two churches a year were closed—except for the exceptional years 1917 and 1919, when the numbers were larger;—but beginning in 1924 the average number closed was three.

The churches closed were not counterbalanced by newly organized churches. Only eight churches had been started in contrast to twenty-nine abandoned, during the years since 1916, in the country or in centers of 250 or fewer inhabitants. Of the new churches, two are Amish Mennonite and Progressive Mennonite, the rest ecstatic churches for the newcomers from further south, not one serving the elements whose churches were closed. The number of open-country churches declined from seventy-one in 1916 to fifty-three in 1928.

What has become of the members of the closed churches? In just three of the cases in hamlets or country, fair proportions of members were transferred to town or village churches. In one of these instances, a church of a neighborhood not far from the county-seat lost its building by fire. Most of the members lived only three or four miles from the town church of the same denomination; none of them were over seven miles away; and the roads to town were not only level but macadamized. The privileges of the town church seemed to them greater than any they could provide for themselves. Why then should they rebuild? On their own initiative, forty-four members of this church, representing twenty families, were received by letter into the town church on the same Sunday. These were the more prosperous members and those with a college education. The poorer and simpler people stayed out.

In the second instance, seven families of an abandoned country church joined a town church of another denomination, more congenial than the town church of their own kind, the people of which they considered of a lower cultural level.

The third country church that had been partially absorbed in the church of a larger center had been one of four points in a circuit centering in a village, all three out-points, two in the country and one in a hamlet, being within the village country community. Denominational officials had endeavored to consolidate all the out-points in the village church. To this plan the hamlet church and one of the country churches consented;

and a majority of the members were transferred to the church in the village and the two small churches were closed. The other country church, which was in a neighborhood not on friendly terms with the villagers, voted to continue its separate existence.³ In no case within our district was a country church merged in its entirety in the church of a town or village.

Consolidation of circuits such as was partially accomplished in the last case described, is rendered difficult by the fact that circuits rarely correspond with the larger communities that are coming into existence about the centralized schools. Ministers have churches in two or more communities; and the churches of one community, even when of the same denomination, are frequently attached to two or three different circuits. Not fewer than eight cases of such imperfect adjustment were discovered in the three counties. An overhead attempt to consolidate two country churches with a village church outside their community had resulted in the closing of both country churches.

Even circuits of little churches in the same community oppose consolidation. For example, a circuit of four churches of seven, nine, nine and seventeen resident members, was so compact that the minister could see all four buildings from the top of his house. "Yet," said the minister, "when we talk of making one church they just kick their heads off." These people were mostly tenants and few of them had conveyances.

Where neighboring churches are of different denominations, the barrier of denominational spirit is added to the difficulty presented by distance, custom and loyalty to a neighborhood institution.

Except in the three cases described above, the closing of country and hamlet churches was not accompanied by the transfer of any considerable groups of members to specific churches. What happened in most of the other twenty-seven instances was something like this: A few families that were prosperous and intelligent enough to be at home in a town or village church, and who at the same time desired definite church relations, transferred their membership to some church in a neighboring town or village. These people had presumably been the leaders in the country church. In some cases their departure preceded and precipitated the closing of the church from which they withdrew.

A second group consisted of families, perhaps of intellectual and musical tastes similar to those of the first group, but without their desire for affiliation and activity in connection with

³ For the hamlet church of this circuit, see page 75.

a definite church. These families attended some church they found attractive, or more likely several such churches, without identifying themselves with any one of them. An occasional family joined some surviving country church. The rest of the families got into the habit of drifting—going somewhere to church some Sundays, and staying away on others. They usually ended in attending church rarely if at all. The people without cars, and all those who had not the clothes or the self-possession to make them at ease in a central church, either found some accessible country church or eventually stopped church-going altogether.

The closing of a country church has accordingly produced the following results: Church-members formerly active have been lost to the church. The solidarity of the neighborhood group has been dissipated. Many of the children who attended the country Sunday school no longer receive religious training, because their parents either are unable to take them to other schools or do not feel it important to do so. The friendly interest of teachers in pupils has been lost. The social contributions of the church to the neighborhood have come to an end. And there is no longer any one near at hand who may be expected—whether or not the responsibility is taken seriously—to invite the shifting families of tenants and laborers to attend churches and to send their children to Sunday school.

The general opinion about abandoned churches was expressed by one informant in these words: "When a school building is abandoned, the children are better taught at a larger school; but when a church is abandoned, it dies where it stands."

WEAK COUNTRY CHURCHES

Some of the country churches still holding services were very weak. Sixteen of the fifty-three churches in the open country possessed fewer than twenty-five members; seven had fewer than ten members. The members of four churches were all old and feeble. The services of three others were intermittent. Three more were partly supported by contributions from non-resident members; and the discontinuance of one of these by the denominational officials was prevented by the members getting salary and benevolences paid in full, partly through earnest appeals to former members or children of members. Several churches were kept going by members who had moved to town but who still went to church in their former neighborhoods, as happened in the cases of sixteen of the country churches. Some of these retired families questioned the wisdom of their course. Several

of the weak churches were seriously considering abandonment. Altogether, eighteen of the fifty-three country churches, one-third of the number, were in a precarious condition.

COMPETING CHURCHES IN SMALL CENTERS

Many of the churches in small centers were also weak. The three counties had twenty hamlets of fewer than 250 inhabitants, the average population being 141; and twelve small villages of fewer than 500 people, in most cases of much fewer than this, the average population being 265.⁴ The hamlets had twenty-four churches among them, and the slightly larger centers had twenty-two. A third of these forty-six churches had fewer than twenty-five members each, and the average membership of the entire number was sixty. Only three of the hamlet churches and only six of the small village churches had resident ministers.

Four of the hamlets had two churches apiece. All the small villages except one had two churches or more. The single exception had had two active churches till within a few weeks of the survey, when the smaller church lost its building by fire. Two of the little villages had three churches and one had four.

The presence of competing churches was regretted by some of the local leaders, who felt that by dividing the money available for church work it made effective ministry more difficult. Combination of forces was being discussed in a number of places. A representative of the Ohio Council of Churches had made addresses in favor of consolidation. Protestant and Methodist officials had visited the churches in company, to authorize and facilitate union proceedings.

Since 1916 competition had been eliminated so far as church services went, in six small centers, so that the number of instances had been reduced from sixteen to ten. Here is what happened in each case.

A. As part of the consolidation of a circuit to which reference has already been made,⁵ members of the larger part of one of the churches in the first hamlet were transferred to the church in the village center of the same community. Not all the members, however, joined the village church.

B. In the second center, two very small churches, at the suggestion of the denominational superintendents, were holding common services without formal union. They were undecided whether they would continue the arrangement.

⁴These figures naturally do not include the people living in the country near these small centers.

⁵See p. 73.

C. In a third community, the remaining members of one of the churches, who were all advanced in years, had discontinued preaching services, but a few of them met at one of the homes for "Sunday school."

D. Too few members were left in one of the churches of the fourth center to maintain it. A few summers before, volunteers from Columbus had held a few services for them. With that exception, the church had been closed for years. The members had not joined other churches.

E. In the fifth hamlet, a small church that had had services intermittently had recently lost its building by fire. A few individuals were attending the remaining local church; others, especially a number of young people, were going to a town church of another denomination. No policy had been adopted.

F. A center of about 200 inhabitants had had two churches for forty years. First one and then the other had ceased activities, so that the place had had no religious work for at least a year. No connections had been made with churches outside the community, and lack of cars and bus service would have made any such arrangement inadequate. A community Sunday school was just being started.

In the first two of the six instances, attempts to apply a definite policy had been made with partial success; in the other cases the outcome was being left to the natural course of events. In no case had the entire membership of both churches been absorbed in a united church. Some individuals were drifting away from church attendance. And one place had been for months without religious ministry.

In spite of the abandonment of some churches and the elimination of competing churches in several places, however, the total number of churches in small centers under 500 had declined since 1900 only from forty-nine to forty-six. Vacant buildings had been seized upon by religious groups usually called by the local people "Holy Rollers," who were represented in 1928 in eight centers, in four of which they were in the presence of older churches.

IS THE COUNTRY CHURCH MORIBUND?

Considering the abandonment of many country and hamlet churches and the precarious condition of some of those still holding services, is it to be inferred that the country churches in these counties are on the verge of extinction? On the contrary, there are several indications that the country church still possesses considerable vitality. At the time of the survey, country

churches constituted one-third of the churches in the whole district, and enrolled a seventh of all the church-members. Moreover, about two-fifths of the church-members and church families living in the country were associated with country churches. Of Dr. Denune's 167 country families, "thirty-three per cent.," he writes, "belonged to and attended country churches, although they purchased only eight per cent. of their material necessities in the open-country and hamlet stores."⁶

The country churches, again, though their individual congregations were small, had in the aggregate a higher average attendance in proportion to membership than did the churches of centers of any size.

A still more important kind of evidence for the persisting strength of the country church is that the three counties had twelve country churches that were prosperous and influential. Each of five of the twelve had more than one hundred resident members, and the membership of each of four others approached that mark. These churches were distributed among five denominations, the Lutheran, the Amish Mennonite and the Methodist Episcopal having three each, the Baptist two, and the United Brethren one. At the time of the survey two had resident ministers, one of whom gave his full time to the single church; and five had community programs.

Furthermore, in the opinion of many of the ministers and lay workers, the country churches are still indispensable. Some families, being without cars, would be debarred from attending services unless these were close at hand. Others, including the families of the poorer farmers, especially those of share-tenants and those of laborers, would not be at home in a town church. Some even of the more prosperous farmers, out of loyal affection for their neighborhood church, infinitely prefer it to any other, however rich the privileges offered. The children of the many families not associated with churches can attend Sunday school only if one is held within walking distance of their homes. Habits of churchgoing are associated with the little church a short distance away. The average distance traveled in going to church by Dr. Denune's 167 families was slightly under three miles.⁷ Many existing religious values would be risked, it was felt, by the abandonment of country churches, especially as the town and village churches rarely take pains to draw in the country people. These values, indeed, had actually been sacrificed in specific cases of abandonment.

⁶ Denune, pp. 65 ff.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

Many criticisms of the country churches were expressed both by the ministers and lay workers and by disinterested residents of the counties. The charge most frequently expressed was that they enlisted a comparatively small number of tenants, though these, as has been seen, formed more than half the farm population.

This charge was justified. A strong country church, the only one with a full-time resident minister, among its forty-three farm families had only nine tenant families, and the head of one of those was an "owner in prospect," that is, the son of a farmer who would in time inherit a farm. Several little country churches were composed of tenants, the few owners that lived in those districts not participating in their activities.

The relation between tenancy and churches has been studied by Dr. Edward C. Tetreau, in a study of the participation of farm families in social organizations.⁸ Some of the districts that formed the scene of this investigation were in one of the counties surveyed in the course of the study described in this book; and the rest were in an adjoining county. Several of Dr. Tetreau's results have significance here:

Tenants' church participation goes down, on the whole, considerably below the participation of owners. . . .

Tenants' church participation varies inversely with the proportion of tenancy in the locality. . . .

Owners in prospect, in general, rate more participation than tenants. . . .

The more mobile tenants do pay less, and go less, as to church activities. The more mobile owners also pay less and go less. . . .

Many witnesses asserted that the churches won the interest of but a small part of the country people. Some churches, deserted for town churches, perhaps, by their more enterprising elements, were declared to consist of the older and more conservative people, who, to use the phrase of one of the ministers, "were so set in their ways that ten steam derricks could not move them." Most of the country people, it was asserted, "never darkened a church door" and "would not even go to a funeral." After listening to radio sermons and church music, and having occasional

⁸Part of this study was published late in 1930 by the Department of Rural Economics of Ohio State University and the Ohio Agricultural Station in mimeographed form. The extracts below are quoted not from the published report but from a fuller manuscript, made available through the courtesy of Dr. Tetreau.

contacts with services in town churches, "they would not cross the road to enter a country church."

Of the indifference to the country churches various explanations were given. Some of these referred to changes in the environment, such as good roads, cars, centralized schools and new opportunities for recreation. A few informants wondered whether part of the trouble might not lie in the country churches themselves. These misgivings were well expressed by a thoughtful man whose profession familiarized him with conditions in an entire county. After speaking of the effects of better transportation and of the centralization of services, he added: "The churches have not kept abreast with modern tendencies in thought and practice. Their leaders are trying to conduct them just as they were conducted in pioneer days. Folks just won't have it. Another thing that I hate to mention but that ought to be included is poor sermons. Too many country preachers are simply ranting over outworn platitudes."

Though much doubtless needed to be remedied, the solicitous attitude shown by the man quoted, in common with many others, arose in part from high ideals and tender consciences. Many superintendents and teachers were working hard to keep little country Sunday schools alive, at the sacrifice of the greater personal satisfaction they might have found in attending town churches. Some who had moved to town attended church in their former neighborhoods, not because they preferred to do so, but in order to add to the small audience where their presence would count for more. Some of the ministers, too, though of the entire number only two lived in the open country and only three in hamlets, were well-trained and devoted men who gave faithful service to their country points.

Clearly the same tendencies apparent in the secular environment are working also, though more slowly, in the church situation. The pull of the neighborhood church is weakening. Churches in many country neighborhoods had already been closed in 1928; and abandonment was progressing at an accelerating speed. A third of the remaining open-country churches were in a precarious condition. Individuals and a few groups of church-members had been drawn to churches in larger centers. Many persons, however, had drifted away from the churches, and the open-country population of a considerable number of whole townships had but small proportions of church-members. Consolidation—if actually achieved in but a few cases and in those only to a limited degree—was yet being widely discussed by many public-spirited church leaders. On the whole, however,

conservatism and a *laissez-faire* policy prevented constructive, united endeavor to conserve the values of abandoned country churches.

TRENDS

Great as has been the environmental changes since 1900 in the three Ohio counties studied, the transformation is still in progress. Additional paved highways have been planned and new consolidations of schools have been voted. More and more farmers are buying cars and radio outfits. More and more children are growing up in centralized schools, and the country people are ranging further and more frequently in their excursions for trade and for pleasure. The old social pattern is passing, the new pattern is just beginning to emerge.

Several motives, or units of design, in the pattern to be, seem already capable of identification. These are, first, the town or village center with a large country community, closely knit to it in economic and social relations. Secondly, the open-country community with centralized school and other common social institutions including a church. Thirdly, the no-man's land, that is, the district with no local institutions and related loosely to two or more larger centers. To what degree these concepts will be realized and in what proportion they will be distributed remains for the future to disclose.

The churches, though moving more slowly than other institutions, manifest similar tendencies. The churches of the neighborhood have lost in power to attract, and are decreasing in number. As in regard to the environment, three motives of a possible emerging pattern are apparent: town and village churches serving large country parishes; strong country churches in large but centralized open-country communities; country districts and classes of country people with few or no churchmembers.

Which of the two kinds of churches would predominate, whether existing religious values could be conserved through the period of transition, and whether the neglected areas and classes would increase or be eliminated, was undetermined. Conditions were in a fluid state. High purposes and earnest workers were not lacking. Three factors in the situation were uncertain:

Would the denominational religious leaders formulate and execute wise, unified and comprehensive policies?

Would the State Council of Churches and the county ministerial associations and other interdenominational agencies study

the local situations and arrange consolidations or transfers of membership when country churches were abandoned?

Would the churches in the larger centers develop a sense of responsibility for the families of their widening country communities?

EXTENT OF LEVEL REGIONS WITH FEW CHURCH-MEMBERS

Much level country approximately similar in environmental conditions to the district surveyed was situated in the older Middle West. What parts of this area contained country districts with few church-members? Bearing on this question were two kinds of available evidence, one direct and the other indirect.

Church surveys of limited districts afforded some information, especially as to abandoned churches and districts outside church parishes; and denominational officials, rural sociologists and others familiar with country situations furnished information, partly in published or manuscript reports and partly in interviews. These two sources supplied a certain amount of direct evidence.

On the other hand, in the Ohio counties studied certain changes in the church situation were clearly associated with changes in environment. Wherever similar environmental changes were found at an advanced stage, there was assumed to be considerable probability that parallel changes in the church situation were also present. This probability was naturally strengthened where indirect evidence was reinforced by direct. The available data did not make it possible to delimit the area having conditions similar to those found in the Ohio counties, but only afforded suggestive indications of the presence of such districts in territory of wide extent.

THE AGRICULTURAL SECTION OF OHIO

Evidence both indirect and direct was available for the part of Ohio which, though there are farms all over the state, is called the *Agricultural Section* because here agriculture is most prosperous and is the predominant industry. This section, to which belong the three specimen counties, consists of forty-four counties forming the western half of the state and lying for the most part in the Corn Belt. The conditions of this whole area, except for a few counties around the edge, which are less characteristically Corn Belt territory, are homogeneous and are well typified by the counties described.

The surface is remarkably level, having been, as in the three counties, either planed by glacial ice or deposited in glacial lakes.

The counties are small and compact. The county seats, which are in most cases towns or small cities, in a few instances villages or large cities, are centrally located, and from them radiate fine surfaced roads connecting these centers with one another and serving the farmers.

In 1925 not more than a fifth of the farms of any of these counties were on dirt roads; in half the counties less than a tenth. The rural density in 1920, except for a few counties with large cities, ranged from thirty to seventy persons a square mile. The farm population, too, was well distributed over the whole area, for in almost all counties at least seven-eighths of the acreage was in farms, the average size of which in most counties ranged from eighty to one hundred acres. The people are nearly all of American birth. The rural population has almost invariably somewhat declined. Agriculture is prosperous. Production is abundant. The income per acre in 1921-1924 averaged \$15 to \$25. The price of farm land in 1925, except in a few border counties, was over fifty dollars an acre, and in more than half the counties was over seventy dollars an acre. Tenants almost invariably operated more than a quarter of the farms, and in one-third of the counties the proportion was above the national average.

The three counties studied, therefore, are typical of the whole so-called agricultural section of Ohio in respect to the origin of the people, the size of centers, the disposition and excellence of roads, the density of farm population, and the slight decline in rural population. On points indicating comparative prosperity, such as value of farm land, they rank among the leading counties; and they accordingly had among the highest proportions of farm tenancy. They are also among the third of the counties that had the fewest farms on dirt roads. On the whole, then, our indirect evidence from similarity of environment would lead us to expect that the country-church situation in the wider area might also be comparable to that in the three counties, though possibly the processes of change might be a little less advanced.

Direct evidence as to this was available from county church surveys and maps made partly under the Interchurch World Movement in 1919 and 1920, and partly a little later under the Ohio Council of Churches. This material afforded information regarding abandoned churches and districts outside church parishes.

In 1919 to 1921, abandoned churches were present in every county in numbers ranging from three to twenty-nine. The average was twelve per county. In the aggregate there were

more than one-sixth as many abandoned churches as active churches. In the specimen counties, nearly half the abandoned churches present in 1928 had been closed since the Interchurch and Council of Churches surveys.

Districts outside parish boundaries, though not very significant where there is much waste land, do indicate, in areas so fully occupied by farms as these, the whereabouts of families not reached by churches. The survey maps prepared by the Interchurch World Movement and the State Council of Churches show that all but three counties had at least one such district, and that about two-fifths of them had three or more. We therefore have two kinds of direct evidence that even in 1920 or thereabouts, such church conditions as were found in the three specimen counties in 1928 existed all over the so-called Agricultural Section of Ohio.

THE INDUSTRIAL SECTION OF OHIO

The fifteen counties in the northeastern part of Ohio form what is called the *Industrial Section* of the state, because it contains a large proportion of the manufacturing cities and towns. Much farming is done here, but it is less prosperous than in the region we have just been considering. Roughly corresponding with the "Western Reserve," this section was settled largely from New England. It had a number of educational institutions. The topography is for the most part level. Road improvement was started here earlier than elsewhere in the state, and the consolidation of schools was well advanced before it had hardly begun in other sections. These two movements, it will be remembered, were closely associated in the three counties with social and religious changes.

In addition, the character of the country population had been changed by the nearness of cities with factories and offices. A survey of three typical townships in this section showed that the children of farmers had gone to cities to work, that farms had been sold to commuters who lived on farms for the sake of economy, that part of the newcomers were immigrants, and that in some cases Protestants had been replaced by Roman Catholics.⁹ These changes had naturally occasioned serious difficulties for the country churches. Another movement of population that embarrassed the churches was exemplified in a county near Cleveland which has attractive scenery. This county was re-

⁹ E. E. Lively and P. G. Beck, *Movement of Open Country Population in Three Counties of Northeastern Ohio*. Mimeographed Bulletin, Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, 1929, pp. 31 ff.

ported by an interdenominational official to have been invaded not only by the families of city workers, but also by well-to-do city families who wished to live in the country. Neither new element cared for the churches of the farmers whose places they had taken, and these churches, said the informant, had fallen into a deplorable condition.

In this Industrial Section also, the data of the Interchurch World Movement and the State Council of Churches show that there were present both abandoned churches and districts outside church parishes. The former were 15 per cent. as numerous as the active churches. Districts outside church parishes were present in most of the counties, and in nine of the fifteen there were three or more such districts.

NORTHERN INDIANA

Much of Indiana lies in the Corn Belt. Conditions are roughly similar to those in the agricultural section of Ohio. Two out of every three miles of road had been surfaced in 1926, a higher proportion than in any other state of the Union. Only one-fifth of the farms were on unimproved roads and there was a car for every four persons. The consolidation of schools was well advanced. The number of farms and the rural population had both slightly declined.

A short visit to one of the agricultural counties in the course of the present study brought to light the fact that there, as in Ohio, country churches were being abandoned. Large groups from two out of six country churches recently closed, and a small group from a third church, had joined the town churches of their denominations. From the other abandoned churches only scattering individuals had transferred their membership; and as in Ohio, there were observable a tendency to drift, a divided adherence, and a failure to conserve religious values.

Denominational officials stated that the closing of country churches was common throughout the state. This report was confirmed by the fact that in spite of the gain of 16 per cent. between 1900 and 1920 in the population of Indiana, through growth of the cities, there was a slight decrease in the total number of churches.

SOUTHERN MICHIGAN

A church survey¹⁰ of a county in southern Michigan obtained several findings pertinent to the present investigation. The

¹⁰ Made by a student at the State College of Agriculture and not published.

county was near Lansing, and was level, with 92 per cent. of the area in farms. This county had eleven closed churches, from which only one family attended a town church. It had also eight districts with few or no church-members, the combined area of these districts constituting nearly one-eighth of the county. Five districts had abandoned churches, eight churches in all. In only one of the districts were religious services of any kind being held. The parishes of the existing country churches in the county were very small, the church families as a rule living within a mile and a half of their churches.

Denominational officials were much concerned about the state of the country church in southern Michigan. A published report declares that 5,000 rural members, one-sixth of the rural membership, had been lost by the Michigan Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church within five years.¹¹ A Baptist minister who had recently filled an official position said to the investigator that there were many "dead or gasping" country and village churches of his denomination. Another Baptist official marked the weak churches in the list printed in the Minutes. The number of town and country churches thus indicated was eighty-four, or 28 per cent. of the entire number in places of under 5,000 inhabitants. The same informant estimated that less than one-sixth and possibly only one-tenth of the people were reached by the churches. He considered the frequent abandonment of country churches a very serious matter, "For," he said, "the country people will go to hell before they will go to a city church." This last condition contrasts with that in Ohio and Indiana, where some of the farm families did attend town churches.

SOUTHERN WISCONSIN

A church survey of Dane County, Wisconsin,¹² the county in which Madison is situated, reported thirteen abandoned churches, nine of them in the open country. The closing of the country church had been followed in some cases by attendance at one or more easily reached city churches. A number of districts with few or no church-members were also discovered. Some were in neutral area; others were neighborhoods too small ever to have supported a church; in others a church had been abandoned.

¹¹ *Michigan Conference Minutes, Methodist Episcopal Church, 1927*, p. 60.

¹² J. H. Kolb and C. J. Bowman, *Rural Religious Organization*, pp. 55, 56, 60.

EASTERN KANSAS

Two surveys including data regarding country churches had recently been made in northeastern Kansas. A study of two contiguous counties by a student at the State College of Agriculture resulted in finding six abandoned country churches. Enough constituents of the country churches had been attracted to town churches over the good roads to make it impracticable to keep the country churches open.

In the course of the other survey, Dr. Walter Burr discovered in part of a county containing a small growing city nine abandoned country churches. One had been formally merged in the city church of the same denomination, the property being sold and the proceeds added to the building fund of the city church. In seven cases members had joined city churches as individuals. In the remaining instance the members had moved away. Dr. Burr believed that the change had been for the better, pointing out that since these country churches had been abandoned many of the city churches had rebuilt or improved their buildings, had increased ministers' salaries and benevolences, and had gained in attendance. In the same period, however, the population of the city had considerably more than doubled.

Kansas as a whole lost 9 per cent. of its churches between 1906 and 1926, although it made a 25 per cent. gain in urban population between 1900 and 1920; therefore the abandonment of country churches was evidently common in the state.

OTHER MIDDLE-WESTERN STATES

Changes in the country-church situation similar to those observed in Ohio have been found to exist in certain districts that happen to have been surveyed both in Indiana and in eastern Kansas. No parallel investigations were available for the states between, that is, for Illinois, Iowa and Missouri. But although in these intermediate states far less progress had been made in the consolidation of schools and the improvement of roads, nevertheless in other respects the larger part of each state had environmental conditions similar to those in eastern Kansas and Indiana. Iowa, most of Illinois and northern Missouri belonged to the Corn Belt, and had the characteristic flat and fertile lands of that region, with almost every corner in use, high values for farm land and high percentages of farm tenancy. As in Indiana, the rural population was dense. In all five states alike, both the number of farms and the rural population had

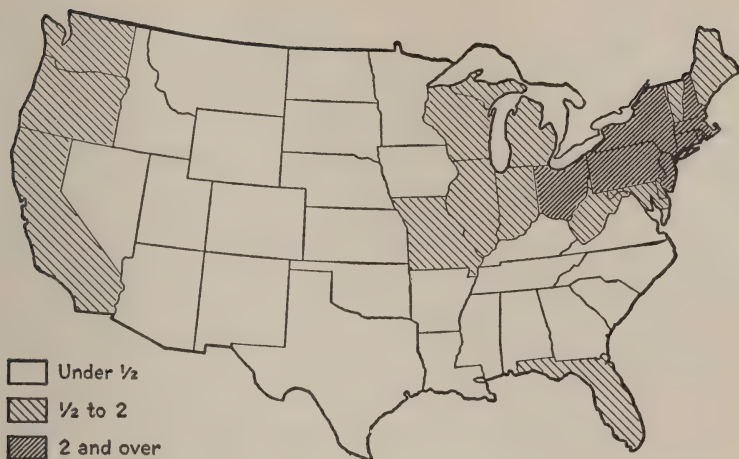


DIAGRAM XIV

Map of the United States, showing comparative degrees of industrialization, as indicated by the ratio of number of laborers engaged in manufacturing to number of persons working on farms, 1920, by states

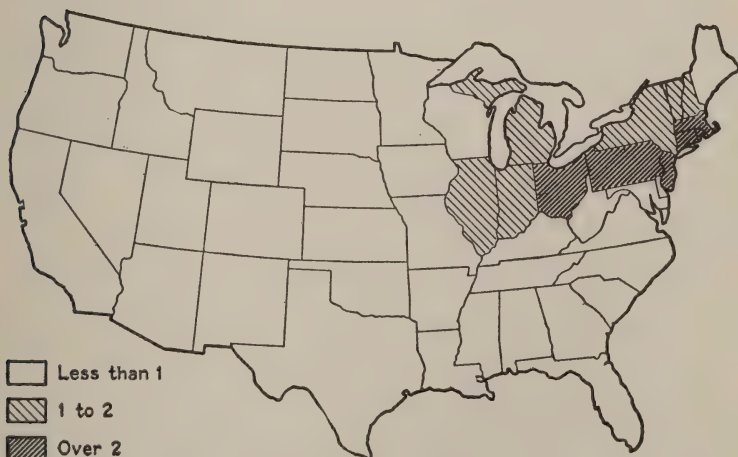


DIAGRAM XV

Map of the United States, showing comparative degrees of urbanization, as indicated by the number of centers of 5,000 or more inhabitants per 1,000 square miles, 1920, by states

somewhat declined in the decade 1910 to 1920. The number of churches showed a net loss since 1906 in both Iowa and Missouri.

Indeed, these two states and Vermont were the three states with the highest rates of decline. Missouri had in 1926 only seven-eighths as many churches as in 1906, and Iowa had less than five-sixths as many as in 1906. These states lost more heavily in number of churches than either Indiana or Kansas, for which the rates of net loss were 1 per cent. and 9 per cent. In Illinois, the number of churches rose, but only by 1.5 per cent. As urban population increased in all these states from 1900 to 1920, many country churches were presumably abandoned.

In the neighboring state of Nebraska, too, country churches were abandoned, since the number of churches declined 9 per cent. while urban population increased.

THE UNITED STATES IN GENERAL

The comparative strength in the different states of the Union of the principal tendencies with which the decline of country neighborhoods and the closing of country churches were found to be associated in Ohio is approximately indicated by diagrams XIV-XIX.¹³ In each diagram the comparative strength of the tendency in question is roughly in proportion to the depth of the shading.

Industrialization has advanced furthest in the northeastern part of the United States, in southern New England, the Middle Atlantic States and Ohio, the territory printed black in Diagram XIV. It has made less but still considerable progress in adjoining states and along the Pacific Coast. It is least advanced in the wide area between these two industrial zones and in most of the southern states.

Comparative degrees of urbanization, as indicated by the number of large centers, are naturally distributed in much the same way as degrees of industrialization. Diagram XV shows this so far as the East is concerned. The tendency is not caught by this test in the three Pacific states only because the area of the western part of each of these states, where there are many cities, is small in comparison with the eastern part, where large centers are absent or very few in number.

Rural population is declining in most of the states where

¹³ For the tests used in preparing the data presented in these maps, and the sources of the statistics on which the tests were based, see Appendix VI.

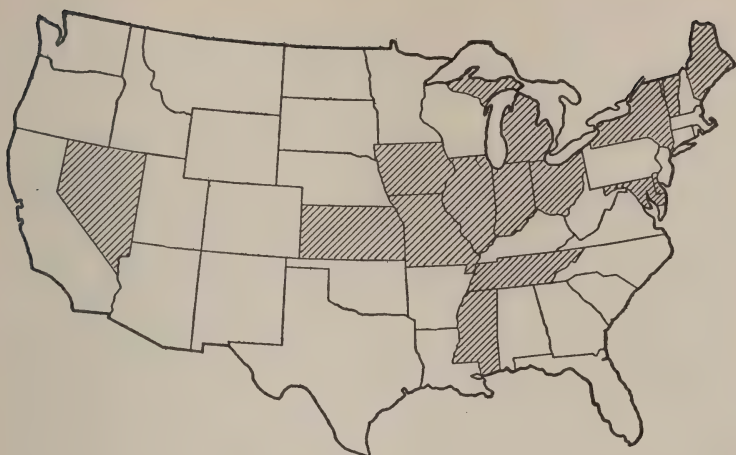


DIAGRAM XVI

Map of the United States, showing states in which the rural population declined, 1910 to 1920. (States shaded had the decrease.)

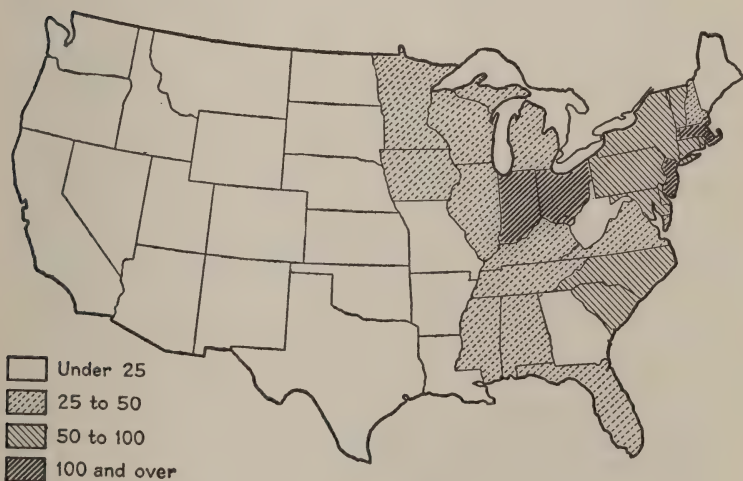


DIAGRAM XVII

Map of the United States, showing comparative development of highways, as indicated by mileage of surfaced roads per 100 square miles, 1927, by states

industrialization is strong,¹⁴ in eight states of the Middle West and in a few scattering states.

The mileage of surfaced roads is more extended in relation to area in the eastern parts of the United States, as is shown in Diagram XVII. The development of roads as affecting the farm population is shown more clearly in Diagram XVIII, which indicates the comparative proportions of farms on surfaced roads. The proportions are highest, first, in the northeastern states and in those of the older Middle West; and secondly, in the three states along the Pacific Coast. From 15 to 30 per cent. of the farms are on surfaced roads in a considerable number of other states, especially in the Far West and in the South.

The number of passenger cars in proportion to population is high in the thinly settled states where cars are almost indispensable, and in the older Middle West. It is not so high in the industrial states, large proportions of the people of which live in manufacturing towns, where they do not absolutely need cars even if they could afford them.

The comparative strength of the tendency to consolidate the country schools is less readily shown by a map. But the movement has made comparatively little progress in the long-settled and conservative East, and in the wide spaces of much of the West. It has been carried furthest by individual states, largely in the South and West, such as North Carolina, New Mexico and Colorado.¹⁵

From the foregoing generalizations, illuminated by the maps, the conditions accompanied in Ohio by the decline of country churches are shown to be present in the highest degree, not only in the older Middle West, where evidence of the existence of this decline has already been given, but in the industrial sections of the northeastern part of the United States. Here the invasion by city workers of the neighboring countryside is presumably tending to demoralize country institutions in the way it has been shown to do in the industrial section of Ohio. Even among the hills of Vermont, as appears in an earlier chapter,¹⁶ country districts from which industrial communities are readily accessible, experience somewhat similar effects.

On the other side of the continent, along the Pacific Coast,

¹⁴ The Census gives no data for rural population for New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Connecticut. But in a map somewhat similar to that given here as Diagram XVI, though on a somewhat different basis, the Census classes these states among those in which the population of territory rural in 1910 declined between 1910 and 1920

¹⁵ See Table XII.

¹⁶ See p. 41.

several of the tendencies tested are also shown by the maps to be prominent; and others would undoubtedly have appeared well-advanced in the western parts of the Pacific states, if these districts could have been isolated statistically from the thinly settled eastern parts of the states. In the rich and well-developed valleys between the Coast ranges and the Sierra and Cascade mountains, and also in some of the coast counties, the conditions with which declining country churches have been found associated in the Middle West are well advanced. That the country churches are actually in danger there, was attested by denominational superintendents interviewed in the course of the present study; and this testimony was corroborated through several brief surveys in that region.

Some of the forces tending to undermine the country neighborhoods and their churches are present in varying degrees all over the United States. Such are the rural delivery of mail, the activities of divisions of agricultural extension, and the improvement of roads.

Moreover, the tendencies that are transforming the social pattern are still in progress. The mileage of improved roads is increasing year by year. More and more radios are being bought. Additional schools are being consolidated. The cities continue to grow at the expense of the country districts. The decline of country churches, accordingly, which is now most pronounced in the northeastern corner of the United States from the Mississippi River eastward, and which is most evident in the level portions of this territory, having already invaded the region near the Pacific Coast, may be expected to endanger the welfare of country churches in progressively wider areas, as the forces that are transforming the social pattern continue to extend their radius and to increase in strength.

Chapter IV

GRAZING REGIONS

Grazing was begun very early by the Spaniards in California and Arizona, and was the first stage of development over large parts of the West. Conditions in the Grazing country are very simple, and pretty much alike throughout. Sparsity of population is the predominant characteristic, and the one exhibited in a more striking degree by the Grazing country than by any of the other kinds of area covered by this study.



DIAGRAM XX

Impressionistic Map of the Grazing regions in the United States.

The Grazing regions extend over the vast plateaus between the Cascade and Sierra mountains on the west and the high chains of the Rockies, and also over the arid belt of the Great Plains immediately east of the Rocky Mountains, and thus cover almost the whole of Wyoming, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico and Arizona, besides occupying considerable portions of several other states.¹ In these regions are found 110 huge counties primarily devoted to grazing over practically their entire extent. These

¹The approximate location of the Grazing regions in the United States is shown in Diagram XX.

counties comprise one-sixth of the land area of the United States, an area equivalent to considerably more than half the territory east of the Mississippi River. Arid Grazing lands, indeed, are far more extensive than any of the other kinds of poorly enlisted territory covered, comprising nearly three times as much area as either the Dry-farming or the Mountain regions, and considerably more than three times the area of the Cut-over sections. These Grazing counties had in 1920 nearly 800,000 inhabitants, of whom more than three-fourths lived outside of centers of 2,500 or more inhabitants.²

GENERAL ASPECT

One traveling by stage in a typical section of Grazing country sees a treeless billowy plain that stretches far off to the horizon, to a long flat-topped mesa, a jagged butte, or a range of low mountains. The general coloring is gray, green or tan. The vegetation, chiefly low, stiff sage brush, bunch grass and coarse weeds, is sparsely dotted on the dry, coarse soil.

The traveler jolts along the rough road for miles and miles without seeing a sign of human habitation. At long intervals he passes a neat white wagon with a rounded top, which is the abode of a solitary sheep-herder. After journeying on many more miles he sees a herd of cattle, brown patched with white, handled by two or three cowboys on horseback. By and by he passes a ranch, which has only a group of small, low buildings with perhaps a windmill as the most conspicuous feature. The shelter for the stock is a roof supported merely by posts. A pile of rough fodder stands in the open air near the corral. About the buildings is no cultivated field, no patch of garden, not even a single tree or a blade of grass in the bare, brown earth.

A little hamlet is reached after three or four hours more of traveling. Small cabins, some of them destitute of paint, straggle along both sides of the road. Several stores crowded with miscellaneous goods have false fronts to suggest an imaginary second story. There is a filling station, and several places that at least nominally are pool rooms, cafes or candy stands. Among the buildings lie old saddles, packing boxes, and tin cans. To this hamlet, far from any railroad, the ranchers for many miles around come for their supplies.

More hours of sage brush. The sun is hot and glaring. The traveler is covered with dust, and there is grit in his mouth. Presently he sees the slender open towers and the derricks of an

² The delimitation of the Grazing regions and the selection of the sample are explained in Appendix III.

oil field; and as he draws near he hears the thud of engines pumping the crude oil.

On and on bounces the stage. More sage brush. Another sheep-herder. Later, the road traverses some bad lands showing fantastically shaped hills where the ground is white with alkali.

At last appear ahead, when the sun is low, a river, a tall chimney, an elevator and several churches, which rise from among the first trees seen all day. The stage crosses a bridge and enters what might almost be a village in the Middle West. Trees line the paved streets, and about the tidy houses are green shaven lawns and attractive shrubbery. The gush of water from a hose is pleasant to the ear. This valley is the county-seat of a Grazing county. Because it has a railroad, a little irrigated land and a beet factory, it forms a great contrast to the vast dim, solitary spaces that stretch about it on all sides.

SPARSITY OF POPULATION

Here is a land, surely, with very few inhabitants. This impression is borne out by statistics.

INHABITANTS PER SQUARE MILE

The fifty-five Grazing counties of our sample had a density of 1.2; that is, they had twelve persons to each ten square miles. This density was very low in comparison with the figures for rural districts in other parts of the United States. Not a county in the Agricultural Section of Ohio, for instance, had in 1920 fewer than thirty rural inhabitants per square mile, and more than half these counties had a rural density of more than forty-five.

The above figure for the density of the Grazing regions, 1.2 persons per square mile, included the inhabitants of both villages and open country. Outside the incorporated centers there were only three persons to four square miles. Even this figure, however, took into account the inhabitants of the rare hamlets and oil fields, which were not incorporated. On the farms there were only two persons to four square miles, while on the farms of the Ohio counties surveyed there were forty times as many people.

LOW DENSITY GENERAL

Sparsity of population was general throughout the Grazing country. Not a single one of the fifty-five counties of the sample had as many as four inhabitants per square mile; and three-fourths of them had fewer than two persons per mile. Moreover, the rural districts of each of the five states composed almost

entirely of Grazing country had densities of less than three persons to the mile.

UNINHABITED DISTRICTS RARE

Much of the Grazing country looked as if it had no inhabitants whatever. But the supposition that the figures for density are merely averages, and that in some sections there are absolutely no families, is disproved by the fact that public schools are very widely distributed. A very desolate-looking county in Wyoming, for instance, had in 1924 thirty-three country schools with an average of ten pupils apiece, and each of twenty-five of the schools had fewer than ten pupils.³ Nevada, too, the state with the lowest rural density of all, had 200 schools with fewer than fifteen pupils apiece, and 150 of these schools had fewer than ten pupils each. These Nevada schools were so far apart that five supervisors travelling singly found it difficult to pay one visit to each between the opening of the fall term and the time when winter conditions made the roads impassable.

Even in Arizona, which does actually contain deserts, county maps published by the school commissioner showed school districts to be present in every county and to be well scattered in almost all counties. Clearly the low figures for density were not mere averages; on the contrary, widely separated families were present over practically the whole of the vast area.

RANCH HOUSES FAR APART

On an average, the sample Grazing counties had one ranch in seven square miles. If the ranches had been evenly spaced each would have been two and two-thirds miles from its nearest neighbors.

The ranch houses have to be far from one another because the raising of live stock in so dry a country requires a great deal of pasture land. To get enough to eat from the scattered tufts of herbage, a cow may have to walk as far as twenty miles in a day.

The control of large areas of range is made possible in two ways. In some regions the ranches are very large. This is preëminently the case in western Texas, where nearly one-third of the ranches cover 5,000 acres or more each, and one of the larger posts the sign "seventy-eight miles to headquarters."⁴ In other sections, as for example in the state of Nevada, large areas are in public land, only a small proportion being in farms, and cattle are grazed on the open range.

³ Data from a typewritten report by a state welfare agency.

⁴ J. Russell Smith, *North America* (New York; Harcourt, 1925), p. 425, footnote.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WITHIN A TEN-MILE CIRCUIT?

In an average Grazing district a circle of ten miles' radius, encompassing a little over 314 square miles, would contain forty-five farms, on which would live 188 persons. The population of unincorporated area, which contained hamlets and oil fields as well as farms, would be 239. Even if we were to draw the circle with a radius of twenty miles, thus surrounding an area 1,254 square miles, enough for several eastern counties, we should include only 179 farms and a total population of 953. In some remote districts circles would contain even fewer people. To counterbalance these districts, there are a few more people in sections containing a little irrigated land, and in some sections near railroads. But it would be hard to identify the less sparsely populated areas at sight, the whole country is so very thinly settled.

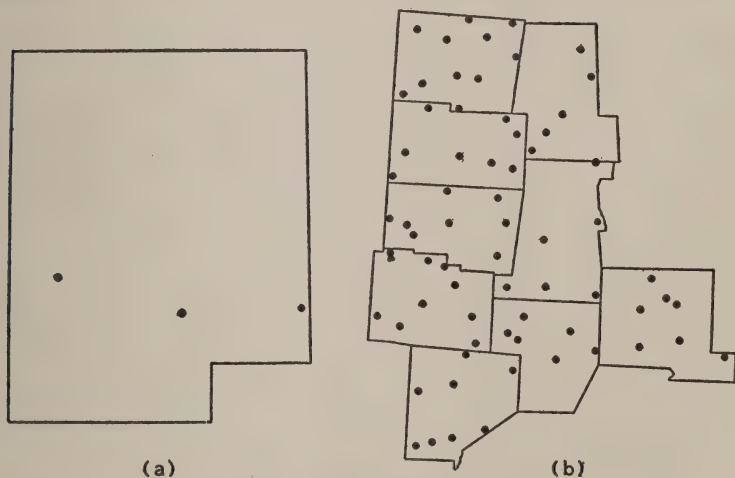


DIAGRAM XXI

Maps showing incorporated places of (a) a typical Grazing county, and (b) a group of counties of approximately equivalent extent in the agricultural section of Ohio

A COMPARISON

To realize how few people live in this kind of territory, so unfamiliar to most people, is very difficult. At the same time, for the purposes of this chapter, it is of considerable importance. It will be of assistance to compare the density of a typical Grazing county with that of more thickly settled country districts, for example, the Wyoming county surveyed with a district in the Agricultural Section of Ohio. To obtain a district approximately equivalent in extent to that of the Wyoming county, it is neces-

sary to add six adjoining counties to the three Ohio counties surveyed. Maps of the two districts form Diagram XXI. In 1920, outside incorporated centers, ten square miles of area had an average in the Wyoming county of eleven inhabitants; in the nine Ohio counties, of 319. A district of similar extent in the Industrial Section of Ohio had, outside incorporated places, 904 persons to ten square miles.

ISOLATION

The extreme isolation of the people on the widely separated ranches of the Grazing area impresses the most casual observer.

FEW CENTERS

This isolation is intensified by the fact that the centers are few and far between. The fifty-five counties of our sample had only ninety-eight incorporated centers among them, an average of less than two apiece in these large counties, the area of almost every one of which ran into several thousand square miles. The Wyoming county surveyed had only three incorporated places, while the equivalent area in the Agricultural Section of Ohio had seventy-two. If these centers had been evenly spaced, in our Wyoming county they would have been thirty-seven miles apart, while in the contrasting district of Ohio they would have been less than seven and a half miles apart.

Instead, however, the centers in Wyoming are usually strung along the only railway—if there is a railway—so that the remoter corners are often fifty to seventy-five miles from a center, and in some cases even farther off. They are not near a center in another county, for similar conditions prevail in the counties of a wide area.

A typical illustration of the distribution of centers in the Grazing country is afforded by the Wyoming county surveyed. The area of the county is four-fifths that of the state of Connecticut. It is crossed by a river, and along the river run two parallel railroads and a highway. On the river and the railroads are the county seat, another smaller village, three little hamlets and an oil field. In the whole of the rest of the county there is not another center: indeed, it would almost be safe to say there are no two houses standing within two miles of each other.

The scarcity of centers in the Grazing country may seem difficult to accept in view of the fact that atlas maps are well covered by place names. Some of these names correspond to small hamlets—chiefly section points on railroads—and to oil

fields. Other names merely mark the location of shipping points or post offices, sometimes having only one resident family.

SMALL CENTERS

A large proportion of the centers that exist, moreover, are small. Five-eighths of the population live outside incorporated places. Even among the county seats, thirty-four had fewer than 1,000 inhabitants in 1920, and twenty-two had fewer than 500, half of these small places not even being incorporated. Being small they had less to contribute to the well-being of the country people, and therefore had comparatively little attraction for them.

ALIEN LARGER CENTERS

The incorporated centers of more than a thousand inhabitants, of which twenty-one were county-seats and nine were other villages, usually had interests alien to those of the ranchers, being oil towns, railway section points, or centers of small irrigated districts with possibly a beet-sugar factory. In these larger villages many ranchers do not feel at home. This must be the case in an even higher degree in Grazing territory having a large town or city.

POOR ROADS

The isolation of the country people is intensified also by the character of the roads. Each of the five states consisting almost wholly of Grazing country had in 1927 less than five miles of surfaced road per 100 square miles of area, being among the only seven states in the Union where this was the case. Three of the five Grazing states, indeed, had less than two miles of surfaced road per one hundred square miles. In contrast to this, thirteen eastern states had over fifty miles of surfaced road per 100 square miles of area, and four of these had more than 100 miles.

Such surfaced roads as the Grazing regions do possess benefit only a small part of the people, for the mileage of surfaced road is usually along one through highway or possibly along two such highways. Five-sixths of the farms, 84.6 per cent., in the fifty-five counties were on dirt roads, and more than half, 53.3 per cent., were on unimproved dirt roads.

Moreover, a good deal of the dirt of the roads was "gumbo," a peculiarly obnoxious kind of clay not known in the East. When gumbo is wet, cars do not merely skid, they slither all over the road. Even strong male wrists and an ever-alert attention cannot avail to keep a straight course. When the mud dries, which it does very quickly, it hardens in deep and crooked ruts.

Many districts have no roads, only trails, or rough tracks over the range. To drive over a trail means the opening and closing of gates; it means lowering barbed wires of a fence to run the car over them; in spring it means fording streams, and in summer getting stuck in the dry sand or gravel of an arroyo. At all seasons there is the danger that the trail may end at the brink of a precipitous gulch or simply fade out in the sage brush. In parts of the Southwest the trails are so rough that tires are provided with shoes of leather studded with metal bosses, as a protection from stones, brush and cactus thorns. But in many places the task of improving the roads over the wide open spaces has been undertaken, and new stretches of surfaced road are being constructed each year.

HARD WINTERS

The isolation is worst in winter. As most of the Grazing country is a mile or more above sea level, the winters are very cold. Snow buries the roads. For several months, in parts of the Grazing country, for instance in Nevada, the back roads are not kept open.

FEW TELEPHONES

The seclusion of the scattered ranch families is the more complete in that telephone lines usually exist only along the roads between centers. It has not been practicable to serve farms on side roads at an average of two and two-thirds miles apart.

THE HINTERLAND

All these factors tending to isolate the ranchers from the centers—distance, poor roads, severe winters, lack of telephone connections, absence of attractiveness for the ranchers in the centers themselves—tend to reduce the more remote districts to a sort of hinterland without definite community relations. Where a trip to town means several hours of bad going each way, it is not taken often by busy ranchers. High-school children spend the week in town. Some families move in for the school year. Supplies are bought for weeks or months ahead. Some of the territory is not reached even by the rural mail carrier.

The remoteness from civilization of some ranch families may be brought home by an incident related to the investigator. The informant had visited a sister whose husband had a ranch in the Black Thunder River country. While he was there, some one died. To telegraph the news, he drove more than a hundred miles over the hills to the nearest railroad station.

SOLITARY MEN

Men following some of the characteristic occupations of the Grazing country are peculiarly solitary. The sheep-herders, for example, pass days in the wilds without seeing a single person or even the smoke of a distant ranch. For occupation, they erect piles of stone, spoken of as sheep-herders' monuments, often setting them on hills where they stand out against the horizon. Most of these men are without families; and many of those that do have wives and children spend long periods away from them. The same thing is true of many cowboys; and some of the men employed in the oil fields, if they have families, are not accompanied by them. Altogether the fifty-five Grazing counties of the sample had 122 men to every hundred women, in contrast to the national average of 104 men to one hundred women.

DIVERSE ELEMENTS

Another factor that made for isolation was that the people were frequently of elements too diverse for congenial association. Mexicans and Spanish Americans in the Southwest and Mormons in Utah were both in the same sections with a few Protestants. Though the large majority of the people were American born, except on the Mexican border, those in a given section came from many parts of the country. The registered voters in twenty country districts of the Wyoming county surveyed, for example, had come from thirty-eight different states.

ISOLATION FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD

Isolation prevails not only within the Grazing regions and among the classes of people inhabiting them, but as between these counties and the world outside. Railroads are few. Thirteen of the fifty-five counties of the sample had no railroad; six more were barely entered by one; four had a railway just crossing one corner. Only six counties had service from two lines, and none from more than two.

Long journeys, moreover, separate the people from centers of culture and of population. Universities, though represented by vigorous examples in the different states, are far apart. And there are few cities in the Grazing country. The five Grazing states, for example, had among them in 1920 only nine cities with populations of over 10,000, and only three with populations of over 25,000.

RECENT DEVELOPMENT

The third fact to be noticed about the Grazing regions is that most of them are still comparatively young and all are imperfectly developed. Though grazing has been carried on for generations in the Southwest, Indians and buffalo roamed over most of the arid country until the coming of the Union Pacific Railway, soon after the Civil War. Some cattle-men still living watched the fences divide the open range, and saw county-seats arise in three months from a waste of sage brush inhabited by "nothing but rabbits and rattlesnakes," as a special issue of a local paper put it. In so new a region, naturally, coöperative effort has not yet fully developed the institutions of civilization.

SCHOOLS

Much attention is being paid to the improvement of the schools. Money for school expenses is available from the proceeds of the school lands, which in these younger states form two sections in every thirty-six; and in Arizona, four in every thirty-six. In addition, Wyoming at least devotes to the schools of a district half the income derived from oil leases in that district. In certain places Wyoming provided a school for as few as two pupils; and the other states also try to provide schooling even for remote and scattered children. Difficult as it is to consolidate schools in this country of long distances and poor roads, considerable progress has been made in this direction by both the counties visited. In the Wyoming county, at the time of the survey, one-sixth of the country children were transported distances of from four to twenty miles to schools at the county seat. For this work twenty-three drivers were employed; and in the year 1927-1928 these men were paid a total of \$35,593. In the New Mexico county also there were consolidated schools at the county seat and at three hamlets along the railroad. Much of the hinterland of both counties, however, had only little ungraded schools.

OTHER FACILITIES

In certain other practical matters the Grazing country was backward. The county in New Mexico had only just voted to build a courthouse. Though the larger villages had sidewalks and running water, and houses were painted, many little places were mere irregular groups of cabins, often unpainted and surrounded by litter. Hamlets and ranches usually had the sanitary arrangements appropriate to the pioneer stage through which

they were passing. Doctors were found, naturally, only in the centers; and the plight during seasons of emergency, of women living fifty or seventy-five miles from town can readily be imagined.

The Wyoming county-seat had a good library; that in the New Mexico county, which was smaller, had none. In both counties the hinterlands had no public supply of books beyond a possible few in the little schools. For art, architecture and drama the day had not come. A few ranchers had radios and more were purchasing sets.

LOW DEGREE OF SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Since the people of the hinterland are of varied origins, live far apart and are very busy, they have not come to know one another well, or to act together in matters of community interest. Rare meetings, however, are held in country localities, by groups with a common interest, such as farm-bureau units and coöperative live-stock associations. For such gatherings there is rarely a suitable hall. The school house is too small. Sometimes people meet at a ranch house; sometimes out of doors. A few community houses have been erected—bare, unplastered one-room shelters, by the roadside, far from any house. They shelter farm-bureau groups, crowded dances on Saturday nights, and little union Sunday schools. These buildings foster the rudimentary consciousness of community that is just beginning to make itself felt. The county agent of the Wyoming county had mapped for farm bureau purposes sixteen country communities, of which three had hamlet centers and thirteen were purely open-country districts. In the whole northwestern corner of the county, however, even the county agent could find no beginning of community consciousness. Throughout the hinterland the complex system of human relationships we associate with the word "community," in which as in a culture-medium social institutions freely develop, existed as yet only in embryo.

Many of the dances that formed the most widely distributed and the most frequent of the opportunities for social contact were disapproved by many of those consulted. At these dances, drinking and rowdy conduct were declared to be common. Even the presence of a sheriff had sometimes failed to insure good order; and some of the dance halls had been closed. Attendance at others had been discontinued by some young people fond of dancing, who had been revolted by the conditions.

POVERTY

One reason why common enterprises have not developed further is that the energies of most men are occupied in making a living and a home for themselves and their families. Most of them have had to start with mere gravel and sage brush. The environment presents serious obstacles: the normal aridity, periods of excessive drought, plagues of locusts, and occasional exceptionally severe winters. Distance from the source of supplies and from shipping points, together with the poor roads, multiply the time and energy required for transportation. Some of the early comers tried in their ignorance to raise hogs and alfalfa where irrigation was impracticable. They failed and departed, leaving ruined windmills, dilapidated shacks, upturned stones and weeds in place of native pasture, and forfeited claims that bring in no taxes, and so increase the burden of the taxpayers.

Another difficulty experienced everywhere in the Grazing country except in the extreme South is that of raising a supply of feed for the winter months. Where water is available, various contrivances have slowly been devised for utilizing it, such as ditches, water-wheels, cisterns and artesian wells. Where there is absolutely no water, the ranchers plant patches of grain or other fodder on a gambler's chance that they may grow large enough to be cut. If they do not, they are grazed where they grow. The land in crops, however, in the fifty-five counties of the sample, constituted in 1925 only one acre in twenty of the land in farms, and in the Wyoming county only one acre in thirty-three.

Again, the size of homestead, though it has risen by successive stages from 160 to 640 acres, is still too small to afford a family living where the return per acre is so low. For the fifty-five counties the average annual income from farm sales per acre was \$1.89. This figure took into account the return from small amounts of irrigated land. The return from arid land has been set by Dr. O. E. Baker at less than a dollar per acre and in the driest section as only fifty cents an acre.⁵ Dr. Baker sets the normal size of stock ranch that will support a family at 2,000 to 4,000 acres.⁶

As long as there was plenty of open range, the smallness of the homestead did not greatly matter; but by 1928 much of the public land had passed into the ownership of individuals and

⁵"Agriculture of the Great Plains," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. XIII, p. 154.

⁶*Economic Geography*, Vol. II, p. 476.

had been fenced with barbed wire. Yet in 1925 nearly five-sixths of the farms in the counties of the sample consisted of fewer than 1,000 acres each.

Another serious obstacle is the large initial investment required of the stockman who desires to buy a ranch. Though the average value of an acre of farm land in 1925 was only \$7.93, lower than in any other kind of territory in the United States, the amount of land required was so large that the average total value of the land alone, for the more than 25,000 farms of the sample, was nearly \$10,500. Live stock was expensive, and to maintain a crew of cowboys, sheep-herders and other helpers, required considerable capital. A large proportion of the ranches were operated by their owners, since tenants could not command the capital required.

Not only were expenditures high, but returns had recently been small. For several years preceding the survey the price of beef had been unusually low.

Plainly the economic handicaps of the stockmen are many and serious. There are so-called "cattle kings," with enormous holdings and large returns. These men have town residences, visit New York or California in winter, and sometimes take their families to Europe. But the cattle kings are few. Most of the ranchers are engaged in a struggle that absorbs all their time, strength and resources.

CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RANCHERS

The people of the Grazing lands have several characteristic traits that it is important to have clearly in mind. They are very cordial to the stranger, hospitable, and willing to go to almost any trouble to assist any one who is in difficulty; they try, in short, to follow the Golden Rule. Being accustomed to wide spaces and large affairs, they have no use for trivial or mediocre things. Hope is strong in them: they have seen a county seat and towns spring out of the desert in a few months, and can cheerfully do without facilities or institutions in calm expectation of attaining them in the future.

THE CHURCH SITUATION

PROPORTIONS OF POPULATION IN CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP

There was wide variation among the Grazing counties in respect to the proportion of the people enrolled in the church-membership. Three counties had less than a twentieth of the people in the churches; and at the other extreme five counties

had nine-tenths or more thus enlisted. All the counties with proportions above the national average, however, fifteen in all, were either in Utah or in western Texas. Of the church-members in the Utah counties studied, 97 per cent. were Mormons. Of those in the Texas counties, three-fifths were Roman Catholic, and more than one-fourth were Southern Baptists or Methodists, Mexicans or Spanish Americans, on the one hand and church-loving settlers from southern states further east on the other, accounted for the comparatively high ratios.⁷

On the other hand, not one of the counties where fewer than one-fifth of the people were church-members, was in Utah; and only one, which had no Roman Catholic church, was in Texas. Where the population was predominantly Mormon or Roman Catholic, and only in counties where this was the case, church-members were relatively numerous, in spite of the fact that in Utah and western Texas the country people lived somewhat farther apart than in other Grazing regions, had if anything fewer and smaller centers, and possessed no superior advantages as to prosperity or the development of the institutions of civilization.

Notwithstanding the presence of counties predominantly Mormon or Roman Catholic, counties having less than a fifth of the people in the churches covered half the total area of the fifty-five counties of the Grazing sample, and contained half their total population. Counties having proportions of church-members above the national average covered somewhat less than a third of the area and contained just about a third of the population.

Of chief interest in this study, however, are the counties that are not prevailingly Mormon or Roman Catholic. Of these the sample included twenty-eight, which are situated in seven states. Not one of these counties has a proportion of church-members as high as the national average. Only six have as much as a fifth of the inhabitants enlisted in the churches. Nine counties have less than a tenth; and three counties, less than a twentieth. Clearly the proportions of church-members in non-Catholic, non-Mormon Grazing counties are very low.

CHURCH SITUATION IN A COUNTY IN WYOMING

In the Wyoming county surveyed, only one person in seven was a member of a local church, a proportion above rather than below the mean for Protestant Grazing counties. The weekly

⁷ Ratios were also high along the Mexican Border in Arizona and New Mexico; but no counties in these states were included in the sample, for lack of the necessary county figures for school population.

average attendance at services of worship was only one-twelfth as large as the population. Not much more than one-fourth of the families had any contact with churches, whether by membership, attendance, or the enrollment of children in Sunday school. The total number of children and young people in Sunday school was only two-fifths as large as the school population, though the beginners in the Sunday schools were below school age.

Distribution of Churches

The county seat had seven churches and the smaller village had four. The only church outside these two centers was a church of an ecstatic denomination in the open country. This had only twenty resident members, and all its adherents belonged to but five families. Three of the four tiny hamlets and the oil field, all of which were strung along the river and its parallel railroad, had formerly had little churches, but these had become entirely inactive.

Yet in the hinterland outside the large election districts centering in the villages lived 3,375 people, more than 45 per cent. of the population of the county. Only 200 of these persons belonged either to the eleven village churches or to the small country church.

Few Members in the Hinterland

Among the twenty-five election districts not containing churches, nine had no church-members whatever, and ten additional districts had fewer than 10 per cent. of the people in the membership of the churches. Only one-sixteenth of the country people belonged to the churches, while one-fifth of the inhabitants of the villages were members. Some of the rare country members lived so far away that they attended a service only once or twice a year. It was not feasible to drive seventy-five miles to church and back, especially considering the nature of the roads. Most of these distant members belonged to the Catholic or the Episcopal church.

Again, only one-ninth of the country families were connected with the churches through membership, attendance or the enrollment of children in Sunday school, although of the village families four-ninths had such a church connection.

Sheer distance and difficulty of access must inevitably have kept from the village churches those living in the more remote parts of the hinterland. But that is not the whole story. Even in the nearer country districts there were many families with whom the village churches had no contacts.

Village Churches with Full-time Resident Ministers

The villagers, having come from sections where centers were close together, and where the standard church was a church with a full-time resident minister, had naturally tried to establish the familiar institution in their new place of residence. All but two of the eleven churches in the two villages had resident ministers, and six of them had full-time resident ministers. The church people, though one-fourth of them lived in the country, had no sense of responsibility for the hinterland. Having their activities and interest in the village itself, they knew and thought very little about the folk of the wide hinterland except as customers or clients.

The Catholic church at the county-seat was the base of a great parish overlapping several counties, with three priests who assumed responsibility for such Roman Catholics as lived in the country districts of the county. Former ministers of two of the Protestant churches had been active in visiting the ranchers. But of the men occupying the pulpits at the time of the survey, only two seemed awake to the needs of the hinterland. Only one held services at any country point, and that one only twice a month during the summer. Of the eight Protestant ministers resident in the two villages, three did not even own cars, and cars are indispensable for work in the country.

The minister with the country appointment once took his fellow ministers in his automobile to visit the ranch families in his country district, in the hope of interesting them in the needs of the country people. One of the other ministers said to him afterwards, in regard to the schoolhouse preaching, "What do you do it for?"

The denominational board of one of the churches had granted \$800 toward the minister's salary, on condition that he preach also at an inactive church in a hamlet and do other country work. He preached once for the little church. When they did not call him and offer him a salary, he did not go again. He had no car, and had debts for his education. He took the home-missionary money, paid his debts, and confined his attention to the village church, which had only twenty-four resident members. The grant of aid was not renewed for the ensuing year.

Competition

Being primarily village churches in villages of about 2,000 and 1,100 inhabitants, the six Protestant churches in the county seat and the three in the smaller village would be considered competitive. Three churches in the county seat had from 100

to 200 members, good buildings, and the conventional kinds of auxiliary organizations. The other three churches had sixty-nine members among them. Two of them represented ecstatic denominations. Home-mission aid was granted not only to the church mentioned above, but also to one of the three larger churches—a church with few country members, whose minister had no car. The total sum received from church boards during the year of the survey was \$1,200.

De-churched People

Some of the country people before coming to Wyoming had been church-members. The minister with the country point had listed fifty persons living within twenty-five miles of town who had formerly belonged to churches of his denomination, but who were neither affiliated with his church nor desirous of connection with any church. Absorbed at first in getting a start, without clothing they felt suitable to a town church, they had lost the desire for churchgoing. The minister called these people “not un-churched but de-churched.”

Some of the districts of the hinterland had certain limited religious privileges on their own ground. These beside the single country church were first, union Sunday schools, and secondly, preaching services.

Union Sunday Schools

Twelve Sunday schools, in contrast to seventy-eight public schools, were being held in hamlets and in the country. The average attendance per school was twenty-three. They were conducted principally by local leaders, most of whom were devoted and a few of whom were competent. A missionary of the American Sunday School Union had organized some of the schools, and assisted any others that desired his help. The schools were more or less transitory. Only one had been in existence more than five years, and most of them were considerably younger than that. Several former schools had been discontinued. A number were closed during the winter months.

The distance travelled by the farthest families in coming to Sunday school was from one and one-half to six miles for the smaller schools. To the oldest and one of the largest, single families came eight, ten, thirteen and fourteen miles; but this was a very exceptional case. The Sunday school in question had experienced leaders. Since it was held in one of the very few community houses, the people thereabouts had evidently attained some degree of social organization. A third element in the situa-

tion was explained by the superintendent of the school in these words:

There are not many families near that do not come. They are thankful for the school, because it gives the only religious instruction they get. . . . Most of the people are young and were used to church before they came. A few that have been here much longer, though not rough-necks at all, are not very responsive. . . . They take more to dancing than to Sunday school.

The people of that school, it should be noted, had arrived recently and had brought religious traditions with them.

Twelve little Sunday schools do not bulk very large in so extended a hinterland. Neither church nor Sunday school was present in eighteen election districts, which together contained nearly one-fourth the population of the whole county, villages included.

Preaching Services

Outside the two villages, preaching services were held at one hamlet and at six country points, usually in schoolhouses. Average attendance was in most cases from fifteen to twenty-five; and the services were commonly held only once or twice a month. Except for a semi-monthly service at the little country church and one other service, both of which were conducted by village ministers, the preachers were earnest men without official commission, who saw the big spaces lacking religious ministry and tried to do the best they could, receiving in return only a small collection. Four of these men preached at certain schoolhouses at regular intervals. One was a superannuated Scotch Presbyterian, described by his hearers as fault-finding and as old-fashioned in theology. Another was called a "sage-brush preacher" because he was a rancher; and one of the others was a laborer from forty to fifty miles away. Neither the size of the audiences attracted, nor the comments made on the preachers by their hearers, gave reason to suppose that these men, devoted though they were, had much influence with the people.

The lives of three-fourths of the people of the hinterland were not touched by Sunday school, country preaching service, or village church.

Hamlets with Closed Churches

Church work of four different denominations had been attempted in the hamlets and the oil field. In every instance the church had ceased to function. Little Sunday schools were held in four of the places, and in one of them preaching services;

another had no regular religious ministry. The churches had not succeeded in enlisting the people.

People enough lived within ten miles of each center to support a good church. The density of the band of townships along the river was a little greater than elsewhere: instead of one person per mile there were slightly over two persons per mile. In each hamlet and the area within ten miles of it in every direction, there must have been at least 700 people.

The membership of the average church in the Mountain Division—a large proportion of the territory of which was composed of Grazing country—was 142. An average of 142 members provided the necessary leaders, fellowship and funds, that kept the churches of the Mountain Division in operation. Were there not in the hamlets of the Wyoming county, with their surrounding country area, 142 church-minded persons?

As a matter of fact, the little churches had been very small. Neither the people in the hamlets, mostly railroad men and their families, nor the men in the oil field, were on familiar terms with the ranchers and their families. It did not occur to the two elements to unite in conducting a church or in any other enterprise.

Again, all these people, coming from many different parts of the country, represented a great variety of religious faiths, so that there were very few of any one kind—nowhere near the 142 of the average church. The little churches, started by denominational missionaries, had had very few supporters. Even with home-mission aid they could afford only a minister living in one of several other fields, who could give them very little beyond a preaching service once or twice a month. The services were held in schoolhouses or the plainest of "one-celled" church buildings. These churches had been able to draw in but a few people. Without services that attracted them, even those originally accustomed to churchgoing had lost all interest in the church.

CHURCH SITUATION IN A NEW MEXICO COUNTY

The other Grazing county surveyed was in New Mexico. It had an area rather more than half as large as the Wyoming county; and its county seat was not much more than one-third as large. Besides a few hamlets along the railroad, there were two in the country inhabited by Catholic Mexicans. A small irrigated section lay near the county-seat. As in the other county, there was a wide hinterland where the ranch houses were very far apart.

The church situation was in most respects similar to that in the Wyoming county. Because the Mexicans were church-

minded, a larger proportion, namely, one-fourth of the people, were church-members. Only three-eighths of the families, however, were touched by the influence of the churches. Average weekly attendance at the churches, including Protestant and Catholic, was equivalent to one-tenth of the population. The number of children in Sunday school was only about three-tenths as large as the school population.

As in the other county, almost all the churches, which numbered eleven, were in the centers. The county-seat had five, four of the five hamlets had one each and the fifth had two. Competition in the centers had formerly been even more intense than in the other county, as two churches in the county-seat had federated, and one church in each hamlet had been closed.

These hamlets had more religious ministry than those in the Wyoming county; and the proportion of the inhabitants in the church-membership were higher for the hamlets than for the county-seat. One resident minister lived in each of two hamlets, and two lived at the county-seat. All but one of these ministers had more than one church. The Catholic churches were visited by a priest once in one or two months on a week day.

The hinterland, except where Mexicans lived, was as little influenced by the churches as that in the Wyoming county. Two country churches had been closed. Either no church-members, or very few, were present in eleven of the fifteen precincts. These poorly enlisted districts covered about three-fourths of the area of the county and contained three-eighths of the population. Six precincts contained not a single church-member. The country people showed a profound indifference to religious activities. There was in the open country only one Sunday school, and no preaching point. Many of the ranchers had been church-members elsewhere, but were no longer interested in churches.

THE CHURCH IN THE GRAZING COUNTRY IN GENERAL

Few Churches

Wide stretches of hinterland without churches, like those observed in the counties described in detail, were found throughout the Grazing country as a whole. Churches were few in number. More than half the counties of the sample had fewer than ten churches, though they were very large counties, averaging 3,300 square miles in extent. Ten counties had fewer than five churches. Altogether the fifty-five counties had, to 1,000 square miles, an average of only three churches, while in the same area

the rural counties of Ohio had 149—fifty times as many. There even were somewhat fewer churches in proportion to population, twenty-six per 10,000 inhabitants, in comparison with thirty-seven in the rural counties of Ohio; although where population is so sparse, more churches rather than fewer would seem to be required if they are to be accessible to all.

Churches Clustered in a Few Centers

Not only were the churches few, but those present were clustered, as in the counties surveyed, in a very few centers. Take as illustrations the three counties bordering on the one in Wyoming already described. In one, most if not all the eleven churches were in three centers in the far corner. In the next county, which was even larger than the one surveyed, there were six churches at the county-seat and outside of it only two Roman Catholic churches. In the third county, also a very large one, only two of the seven churches were outside the county-seat.

In Arizona, where the centers are even farther apart than in Wyoming, to take one more example, there were Catholic churches in the country, but practically no Protestant churches outside the villages and larger places.

Small Centers with Weak Churches or None

Some hamlets had no churches at all. For example, eight or nine little places strung along eighty miles of railroad had no church of any kind. Individual hamlets without churches were numerous. Even small villages lacking a single active church were not uncommon. A denominational superintendent, reporting on three villages in Nevada, to each of which the atlas ascribed 600 to 800 inhabitants, stated that one, "once in a blue moon," had a service conducted by a clergyman living 110 miles away; that another had several extinct churches but none that was active; and that the third, a county-seat and the birthplace of a governor of the state, had never had either a church organization or a church building.

The churches there were in little centers which were almost invariably small and ineffective. Six of the nine Protestant counties having county-seats with fewer than 500 inhabitants had in the church-membership less than a tenth of the people of village and country combined.

Larger churches in small places were not altogether unknown, however. For example, the only active Protestant church in a Wyoming village of about 450 inhabitants had 203 members and a Sunday-school enrollment of 120, and spent \$2,000 on running

expenses and two-thirds as much on denominational benevolences, thus giving away an unusually high proportion of the total church expenditures.

The few churches in the open country, so far as could be discovered, had very few members.

Small Protestant Churches

What with weak churches in small centers and in the country, and competing churches in the larger villages, the average membership of the Protestant churches in the fifty-five counties of the Grazing sample was only fifty-eight. The Roman Catholic churches, on the other hand, had an average of 154 members, and the Mormon churches of 370.

Inappropriate Policies

Three traditional policies were being applied to church work that were not appropriate to the special conditions of the Grazing country. The church with a full-time resident minister as a standard for churches in larger villages was inappropriate because it tended to center the efforts of a church and its minister in the village with at best the country immediately about it, to the neglect of the hinterland.

The circuit system for smaller village churches, and for hamlet and country churches, was inappropriate because the spaces between points were so great and the travel required so fatiguing and time-consuming, that even the centers having the churches received very little time from the minister, and the hinterland was even more completely overlooked than under the full-time resident minister system.

The absence of coördination and of system among the religious activities of different denominations, both official, local and volunteer, with the lack of coördination among religious groups in the same area, was inappropriate in the smaller places and in the country, because the few people within reach could have effective religious ministry only by uniting in a single church. It was inappropriate in the villages because it resulted in competition in the center, thus intensifying the neglect of the hinterland.

Inadequate Ministerial Service

The denominational officials consulted were dissatisfied with the ministers serving their churches. In Wyoming they said that richer churches in Colorado had drawn away their better men by offers of higher salaries. Other Grazing areas were similarly

affected. Because of the small memberships of the churches and the economic handicaps of the environment, salaries were low. Therefore the available ministers were the young or inexperienced, the old, and those who for any reason were less in demand. Some of them, to put it mildly, did not have a business man's standard as to what constitutes a working day. A denominational superintendent said of such a man whom he considered typical of many, "He has always sat on his haunches and he always will."

In Arizona and New Mexico, moreover, invalids sent to the Southwest for their health were supplying churches to which they were physically unable to furnish adequate service.

Some of the ministers, on the other hand, were earnest and hard-working men, attracted by the challenging needs and difficulties of the region. Several of those visited, each of whom was trying to serve an area 100 miles wide, showed in their gray faces the effects of over-strain. In such situations, however hard they worked, they felt, in the words of one of their superintendents, that "a man has to spread himself pretty thin."

Indifference to Churches

Outside the small groups of church-members, the people were indifferent to the churches. Whole classes of the people—the sheep-herders, the cowboys, the oil men, and the section-hands on railroads—were hardly touched by church influence. Almost as little touched by the churches were those who formed the bulk of the country population, that is, the stockmen and their families. Observers not directly connected with church work were inclined to lay the responsibility for this on the churches. The general attitude was well expressed by an extension official in one of the states in which there is much Grazing country. He said:

Cattle people in the live-stock regions are generally not interested in religion or in church. They are fine citizens, big-hearted Westerners. They do big business. They see and understand. There is nothing petty about them. The kind of churches they have do not appeal to them.

THE FUTURE OF THE GRAZING COUNTRY

Vast stretches of territory in the West will no doubt be devoted to grazing as long as we can see ahead in time. Beef and lamb, shoes and woolen clothing are permanent necessities. Grazing is the only purpose for which four-fifths of the land now in arid and semi-arid pasture can ever be used, according to the Depart-

ment of Agriculture.⁸ This permanent pasture was estimated by the same authority to cover 468,000,000 acres. This is equivalent to 731,250 square miles. It is as large as seven of the eight states of the Mountain Division, and constitutes one-fourth of the area of the continental United States. Part is on the Intermountain plateaus and part in the Great Plains. Of this huge territory the general aspect and basic conditions were in 1928, as has been said of Nevada, "as they will be when Gabriel blows his horn."

While retaining its essential characteristics, however, the Grazing country will probably be modified by tendencies now in operation. Some increase in prosperity seems likely to follow the development of roads, improvements in ranch property especially through increase in amount of irrigated acreage, the growing size of ranches, the influence of county agents, and the extension of coöperative marketing. The broader margin accompanying increase of prosperity may well be followed by increased expenditures on churches, provided the people come to consider the church a sufficiently important institution.

The population of the twenty-nine Grazing counties that had experienced no change of boundaries since 1899, taken as a whole, increased about one-third in the twenty years between 1906 and 1926. This gain in number of inhabitants, however, raised the number of persons per square miles only from 0.7 to 1.0. Further slight gains are to be expected, both in the remote, more thinly settled districts, and in certain sections where further irrigation is practicable. In the Grazing country as a whole, however, the density of the population is not likely to make any considerable increase, in view of the large acreage required to make a family living by raising stock.

Popular intelligence also seems likely to increase, both as a result of the great improvement that is being made in the public schools and in consequence of the new methods of popularizing and diffusing information. Radio outfits, in particular, are on some of the ranches, and more will doubtless be bought as prosperity increases; for the radio is peculiarly adapted to the needs of these isolated families, so many of which have no telephones. With growing intelligence and familiarity through the radio with eloquent preaching and fine church music, the standards applied to churches and ministers are bound to become even more exacting.

The embryo country communities, with increasing farm-

⁸ L. C. Gray and others, "Utilization of Our Lands for Crops, Pasture and Forest," *Yearbook of Agriculture*, 1923, p. 427.

bureau activities and growing mutual acquaintance, will naturally become more closely knit, enlisting more families in an increasing number of common interests. They will thus become more favorable mediums for the development of social institutions, including churches.

And what of the prospects of the churches? Are such churches as have been described likely to form centers of social and moral influence in the new civilization that is emerging, a function that was regularly exerted by churches in the youth of the eastern regions of the United States?

If so, they need to enlist much larger proportions of the people. But in the counties old enough to make comparisons possible, the proportions of church-members, instead of rising steadily since 1906 as in most of the states of the Middle West, after increasing till 1916 actually declined between 1916 and 1926 in every one of the four subdivisions of the area.

SUMMARY

Grazing territory, which covers nearly one-sixth of the area of the United States, has very few centers, and the hinterland has seven square miles to every ranch; yet the vast expanse contained in 1920 a rural population of over 619,000. The proportions of the people in the churches are low, except in areas where Mormons or Mexican Catholics predominate. Traditional church policies adapted to quite different territory are being applied. Most of the churches are clustered in the few centers, and especially in the larger villages. The hinterland has little in the way of religious ministry beyond union Sunday schools and volunteer preaching. Great indifference to the existing churches is shown by many of the people even in the villages and by a large proportion of the stockmen; and between 1916 and 1926 the proportion of the people belonging to the churches declined in every one of the four Grazing regions investigated.

Chapter V

MOUNTAIN SECTIONS

In the Mountain regions the people are isolated from the outside world and from one another, at all seasons by difficult if not impassable mountain barriers, and in winter by deep snow and intense cold. And in addition to this extreme isolation, which alone would make the task of the Church a most difficult one, the widely scattered people are peculiarly lacking in religious traditions.

LOCATION, EXTENT AND POPULATION

The mountains of the West cover a large area. The Rocky Mountains extend their double or triple chain with only one break for about 2,000 miles within the United States; and nearer the Pacific the Sierras, Cascades and Coast ranges extend virtually all the way from Canada to Mexico. In this study, measurement of the Mountain area was attempted only where it extends over whole counties. There are seventy-nine of these counties. They include 173,052 square miles, an area equivalent to that of New England and the Middle Atlantic states plus a second Massachusetts, and nearly eleven times as large as that of Switzerland. These counties had in 1920 a total population of 564,270; and the rural population, with which this study is more specifically concerned, was 423,399.

This Mountain country has three main subdivisions, which are shown in Diagram XXII. Among the Central Rockies, so-called because they lie between the Canadian Rockies and another great mass of mountains farther south, are Mountain counties covering more than one-third of the area of Montana, about one-fourth that of Idaho and Wyoming, and the northeastern corner of the state of Washington. In the second large Mountain section, called the Southern Rockies, which is separated from the Central Rockies by a broad plateau 7,000 feet in elevation lying in the state of Wyoming, are situated Mountain counties that occupy nearly a fourth of the area of Colorado and a small part of Utah. In the third Mountain region, which lies among the Sierra Mountains, are fifteen counties in California and two in

Nevada. The location of these three Mountain sections is shown in Diagram XXII.¹

ISOLATION

The people of these Mountain regions live apart from the outside world, and are to a considerable degree isolated from one another. Even the communities are small, and are found in valleys separated by almost impassable barriers.



DIAGRAM XXII

Impressionistic Map of three mountain regions in the United States

FACTORS TENDING TOWARD ISOLATION

The people of the mountains are cut off from the outside world chiefly, of course, by the mountains themselves.

Mountain Barriers

Ranges of mountains form the boundaries of many counties. In the atlas maps of the mountain states, the irregular shapes and sizes of the counties—in contrast with the regular rectangles into which such level western states as Iowa and Kansas are divided—show the effect of the position of the mountain ranges in delimiting the counties among them. It is hard to get into the mountains, and hard to get out of them. The grades are steep, often necessitating zigzag roads. Long detours are occa-

¹ Appendix III contains information regarding the delimitation of the Mountain counties and the selection of the sample counties for statistical study and the counties for field survey. Tables IX and X include the more important statistical findings upon which some of the statements made in this chapter are based.

sioned, too, by precipices, projecting masses of hill, and the location of passes.

To reach many of the mountain districts, it is necessary to make a long climb. Of thirty-eight mountain county-seats the altitudes of which were ascertained, just half are over a mile in elevation. Twelve, indeed, are over 7,000 feet high; and of these, four are at altitudes between 8,000 and 9,000 feet, and three are above 9,000 feet.

Little Service from Railroads

Railway communication with the Mountain districts is frequently poor and is sometimes entirely lacking. Railroad service as indicated by the railway symbols on the atlas maps was studied for fifty-six Mountain counties. Only twenty-two were traversed from end to end or from side to side by a railway; and of these only five had rail communication with more than two adjoining counties. Twenty counties were served by branch lines to one or more points within the county, such branches in four instances barely crossing the boundary. Four counties were reached only by a railway line that barely crossed one corner. One had within its borders a local railroad which afforded no communication with the outside world. And four counties had no railway lines at all.

Some counties connected with the outside world by branch lines receive only a very limited service. In one of the counties surveyed, a mixed passenger and freight train jerks and jangles into one side of the county three days in the week, going back as soon as it has taken on freight and passengers. On alternate days it goes into the other side of the county and out again. A man arriving in the eastern valley by that train on Saturday, unless his business can be done while the bread boxes are being unloaded and the cans of cream put on board, is obliged to stay there till the following Tuesday. The other Mountain county surveyed has a branch line, which, however, is so slow and inconvenient that most passengers use the stage, and most freight comes by motor truck. And Mountain districts served by stages and trucks are still rare.

The topography often makes railway communication very circuitous. Denver is close to the mountains, and cannot be more than 250 miles in a bee line from the county-seats of any of the eighteen rural Mountain counties of Colorado. Yet by railway only two of these county-seats are less than one hundred miles away; and eight are over 300 miles, four being over 400 miles. One of them, Silverton, though only about 200 miles from

Denver as the crow flies, is nearly 500 miles away by railroad.

Nor is even this the whole story. Many trains stop at night, letting passengers go to what hotels they can find, and resume the journey in the morning. Again, many mountain points are reached only after one or more changes of cars, often involving long waits for trains. Although to travel from Denver to Silverton at an uninterrupted thirty miles an hour would require less than seventeen hours, the journey under actual conditions takes forty-eight hours.

Poor Roads

Communication over highways between Mountain districts and the outside world is also difficult. Though most if not all the Mountain counties are traversed by at least one road belonging to the state highway system, and some by two or more such roads, many of these highways are very poor. Steep grades, sharp curves, narrow valleys and rocky road-beds make construction expensive. Both counties and states are spending a great deal of money, supplemented by federal grants, on road-building; but much remains to be done. In 1925, only one farm in nine, of all those in the forty-four sample counties, was on a paved or graveled road. In winter at the altitudes of many Mountain districts the snowfall is heavy; and though there are snow fences on the windward side of some exposed stretches, many roads do not have such protection. Sometimes even the postman cannot get through for several days together. The upper reaches of some state highways leading to national parks and forests are not kept open through the months of snow. In spring, mud holes and washing on the grades make travel difficult. Even after spring repairs have been made to mail-route highways, cars are sometimes bogged in the holes that are left.

Most of the people do not get far from home. The principal of a mountain high school made inquiries through a questionnaire as to how many miles the pupils had traveled by railroad in their lives. The average distance was 250 miles, equivalent to a journey to the state capital and back. Of 193 pupils, 110, considerably more than half, had traveled not more than 300 miles. In certain Mountain communities, the children were reported never to have seen a Pullman car.

Isolation Within Counties

Within the counties themselves there are also barriers which tend to isolate the different valleys from one another. Mountain ranges cross the middle of seventeen counties, dividing each of

them into two parts. One of the counties visited is traversed by mountains so high that for four months in the year they can be crossed only on sleds. Each of six counties is divided by topographical barriers into three or more parts. One county in California has five widely separated little valleys each containing farms. Another is so mountainous that the only portions cultivated are small flats along the streams. Scattered isolated districts similar to those focused in the two counties just mentioned are found scattered among larger valleys all through the mountains. In the Sierras the valleys are cut by streams in the single range, and therefore are narrow and ascending, with foothills and narrow side-valleys. Among the Rocky Mountains wide valleys with nearly level floors lie among the complex mountain ranges; but here also in the narrow upper ends of the main valleys, in small side-valleys, and in pockets in the benches and foothills, are farming districts where families live in great isolation.

Mountain communities are frequently separated, not by mountains, but by ravines. A striking but not uncharacteristic example is found in a California county, where one of the smaller centers is separated from the county-seat by a ravine 1,200 feet deep. In traveling the twenty miles between the two places, it is necessary to descend this height, cross the stream and climb the road on the farther side. A very small high school is conducted in the hamlet, because it is not feasible to transport the students to the county-seat, although an excellent gravel road runs from the county-seat to the farther edge of the canyon. In many similar places the roads are very bad. After what has been said as to the condition of many through state highways, the nature of the side roads can readily be imagined.

The winter snow is naturally even more obstructive on side roads than on the highways. In some districts the women at least do not expect to get away from home during January and February; and they lay in supplies in preparation for the siege of the winter. They are housed partly by the snow, partly by extreme cold. Even in the California mountains the thermometer sometimes registers from six to fifteen degrees below zero for a week together; and among the Rockies it is often still colder and for longer periods.

NATURE OF THE ISOLATION

The isolation among the mountains is different from that in the Grazing country, where single ranch houses are set miles apart like pin pricks in a huge map. This condition exists to

some extent among the mountains also; but for the most part the isolation of the mountains is rather that of small beads strung rather far apart. The Mountain counties have only about two inhabitants to the square mile, less than twice the number found in a square mile of Grazing country; but the mountains and forests shoulder the people into comparatively small portions of the area. Many live along common roads that traverse the length of narrow valleys.

Small Centers

A still larger proportion live in small centers. In this respect the Mountains differ greatly from the Grazing country. Six Grazing counties in Wyoming had among them only fourteen centers outside the county-seat; one of the counties had only one outlying center, and another none at all. A nearly equivalent area consisting of eleven rural Mountain counties of California had eighty-seven such centers exclusive of county-seats. In 1926, a little over three-fifths of the people of the Grazing counties lived scattered in the open country; but only a quarter of the people of the Mountain counties were scattered. On the other hand, only a little over one-eighth of the inhabitants of the six Grazing counties lived in the small outlying centers, while in the Mountain counties nearly three-fifths of the people lived in such small centers.

The contrast is explained by two differences between the two kinds of area. In the first place, over the level Grazing lands people can drive their cars long distances to buy their supplies and to obtain other services, whereas the barriers that transect the Mountain counties effectually limit the service area of any one center. On the other hand, many of the centers in the mountains were started in the days when the radius of a community was limited by the team-haul; and their site was determined by the location of mines, forks of river valleys, railroad junctions, and the like. Therefore they are often rather near together, even when not separated by topographical barriers. The average population in 1920 of the incorporated Mountain centers including county-seats was 369. Centers so small are naturally unable to offer as attractive services as larger places. A center of a few hundred people, with small outlying country environs, cannot afford to display the best films at its little movie theatre. It cannot have a chain store, or a good doctor—or perhaps any doctor at all. Virtually all the little centers, however, have a “pool room” or “café”; and most of them have dance halls.

Weak County-seats

Isolation in Mountain area is generally intensified by the lack of the unifying influence exerted by a large and influential county-seat. Many of the county-seats are small. Thirty-four of the fifty-seven investigated had in 1920 fewer than 1,000 inhabitants each. Eighteen had fewer than 500 inhabitants; and of the eighteen, nine were hamlets of fewer than 250 people. Fourteen county-seats were away from the railroad. In view of their small size and isolated location, it is not surprising that many Mountain county-seats serve their counties only as the seat of governmental activities.

Kinds of Centers

Again, the kinds of communities generally found in the Mountain country have little in common either with one another or with the farming population near them; and their social organization is very rudimentary.

In the mining towns the miners are imperfectly socialized. Many of them are without families; and as a class they move frequently from place to place. Moreover, their hard work and their usually intense dissipations tend to absorb their whole attention.

The so-called "ghost towns," former mining towns where mining operations have ceased, contain only a few poor families.

The lumber camps in the forests are usually transitory, and even during their brief existence are frequently inhabited only during the warmer part of the year. The people rarely show any impulse to start social organizations in their temporary quarters.

Mill villages, centering in a wood-working factory, a planing mill, a box factory or a wood-preserving plant, are year-round communities; but the facilities they offer are generally crude and ugly in the extreme.

Section points on the railroad, again, are usually occupied only by railroad workmen and foremen, with a few storekeepers; though from time to time the population is swelled by gangs of special repair men living in cars.

Points for shipping live stock, too, serve chiefly as meeting-places where stockmen and purchasers make their bargains. In such places there is a great deal of gambling, drinking and fighting, more even, if possible, than in the mining towns. One that was visited was reported by a reliable authority to have five saloons, nominally soft-drink places, cafes and confectionery stores, and—on the testimony of the sheriff—an average of two

fight a week, which often took place at the Saturday-night dances.

The resorts, moreover, are ordered mainly to provide for the needs of recreation-seekers attracted by the mountain scenery and the opportunities for fishing and hunting, camping and auto-mobiling. Some of these resorts are seasonal places at high altitudes, usually in the national forests, and wherever possible along lakes or streams. Others are centers in favorable locations that have provided accommodations for tourists. The shipping-point for live stock mentioned above is also a resort. It has a glorious view of the mountains; it has very fine fishing and is within driving distance of hunting grounds and of national parks and forests; and the wide-open conditions prevailing recommend it to a large class of recreationists.

Finally, the construction camps of great building enterprises, such as dams, tunnels and power-plants, are mere temporary aggregations of workers without social organization.

Open-country Population

Though three-fourths of the people live in the small centers, the other fourth that live in the open country must not be forgotten. Some live in folds of the mountains where just water enough flows down to supply one family and their live stock and to grow a small amount of forage crops. The farms of others are in small side valleys, or at the narrow upper ends of larger valleys. Families rarely live so far apart as in the Grazing country in actual miles, but the steeper grades, the detours, the bad roads, and the colder winters make their isolation fully as effective.

Racial Groups

Another basis of separation among the people of the mountains is difference of race. An average of about one person in seven is foreign-born. Sometimes families of one race are grouped apart from others in a small community. Two examples are situated some thirty-five miles apart on the same railway. One is a tiny place, composed almost entirely of log cabins upon the lower slopes of a canyon, which was settled by Scotch Presbyterians. The other is a larger and more conventional community of Lutherans, which has a dignified church building. In other places immigrants from different countries are scattered among the native Americans.

Among the divergent elements of the population are half-breed Indians, usually called "breeds," whose origin dates back to the

wild mining days. There are also a very few pure-bred descendants of the original Indians. Both are found chiefly in the more remote districts of the mountains.

Submerged Persons

Still another kind of detached individuals are what a certain informant called "submerged persons." Among these are men who fled to the mountains years ago to escape from their past, whether because of sorrow, of failure or of misdoing. Others are women who, coming hither as teachers or homesteaders, have married men of less education and refinement than themselves. Those of both classes are as a rule in revolt with the crudities and privations of their adopted world. Many of them are openly scornful; all keep largely to themselves except a few women who help in Sunday schools and women's societies.

The present isolation is greater than it needs to be, even in the mountains, in this day of automobiles and road building; for the isolation of the past has produced psychological effects, such as stay-at-home habits, self-distrust and shyness, that tend to keep individuals and families apart by themselves.

EARLY STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

To appreciate the primitiveness of certain features of the mountain environment, we must glance at the history of the Mountain counties.

HISTORY

The history of white people in the mountains began with the discovery of gold in California in 1848. The rush of the so-called "Forty-niners" to the gold fields was very rapid. All have heard about the rough, wild days of theft and violence, among crowds partly composed of desperate and avaricious men; and of how the Vigilantes hung criminals to preserve the general order; till regular county and local governments were established. That day dawned very soon. In 1850, only two years after the discovery of gold, five Mountain counties were listed in the United States Census, and their populations were given.

In those early times food was very dear in the mountains, because the cost of transportation from the distant East by prairie schooner and mule-train had to be added to the original price. This made it profitable to clear and till farms, especially as the water piped to the mines was available for irrigation. Among other civilized institutions such as schools, newspapers, and prisons, churches were early established, partly by a sprin-

pling of settlers having religious traditions, partly through missionary enterprise.

In the next few decades an enormous amount of gold was taken from the California mines: the value of that taken from one county has been estimated at \$70,000,000; of that from another, at \$100,000,000; of that from a third at \$200,000,000. In time, however, the metal that could be taken out easily and cheaply was exhausted in one county after another. Population decreased. Less food was needed on the spot. The return from the surplus exported was the price received in the distant eastern market less the cost of getting it there; and this fact brought down the price received at home. So farmers had a hard time of it; and many of them also left. Communities shrank in size. Institutions shriveled, including many of the little early churches. Temporary booms came with new methods of mining and the ventures of fresh companies. Some amount of mining was still done in most counties and a good deal in a few districts, even in 1928; but in most Mountain sections of California the glorious days of mining were long past.

The mining history of California was repeated, first in Colorado and then successively in Nevada, Montana and Idaho. In some places gold was mined; in some, other metals, as silver in Nevada and copper in certain parts of Montana and Arizona.

In some states, notoriously Colorado, the combination of many transitory miners without interest in local government, and rich mining companies eager for concessions, resulted in political corruption.

The mining districts of one state after another reached the apex of their boom. For many counties there followed, as in California, a period of decline in production, shrinkage of population, and decadence of social institutions including churches.

Just how great the decline in population has been it is hard to determine, because of many changes in county boundaries. Only twenty counties in California and Colorado were discovered that had not experienced such alteration. Of these all but three had fewer inhabitants in 1920 than at some previous Census period. For ten the decline had been more than 50 per cent., and in several cases the shrinkage had been considerably greater than this. Sierra County, California, had in 1920 less than one-sixth as many inhabitants as in 1860; and Mono County had only about one-eighth as many as in 1880.

Lumbering rather than mining had occasioned the settlement of some of the younger counties, and had followed mining as a major occupation in many older districts. This had happened

chiefly on the western slopes of the Rocky Mountains and on the mountain ranges nearer the Pacific Ocean, because in these comparatively moist regions timber was better and more abundant. Lumbering led to the clearing of land for farms, and to the subdivision of counties as population grew. Fourteen Mountain counties were organized after 1900, and two after 1920.

POVERTY

Although much wealth has been drawn from the mines and forests of the mountains, the people actually living in the Mountain districts are rather badly off in several aspects. For one thing, their isolated position makes it necessary for them to pay heavy freight charges on all the goods they import. And as they raise only part of their food and have very few manufacturing establishments except sawmills, they import many of the necessities of life. This makes the cost of living high for everybody.

Large expenses for freight or trucking are also incurred in marketing the products of the occupations of the Mountain districts. Moreover, the principal occupations are either declining or at least are operating under serious handicaps.

MINING

In 1919, mines were still being operated in at least fifty-five Mountain counties. The eight states in which these counties were situated had in operation 1,773 mines, virtually all of them in Mountain districts. Three states still had active gold placer mines, California having seventy-eight mines of this kind. Lode mines producing gold, silver, copper, lead or zinc or combinations of these metals, were found in seven of the states; and the total number of such mines in 1919 was 927.

During the decade preceding 1919, however, mining had declined so much that the number of mines and quarries in operation in 1919 was less than two-fifths the number in 1909; and the recession of mining was reported to have continued in the years since 1919. When the ore rich enough and accessible enough to be produced at a profit is exhausted at a given mine, operations stop, and many people move away. New discoveries or improved processes frequently make possible the opening of new mines and the reopening of old mines. The available mineral wealth will naturally be exhausted in course of time. Meanwhile the shifts and fluctuations of mining conduce to instability both in economic and in social conditions.

LUMBERING

Another industry very important in many Mountain counties is lumbering. Sawmills or other wood-working establishments existed in 1927 in forty-two Mountain counties, and numbered 184. In the mountains as elsewhere, however, lumbering is undergoing a serious depression, owing to conditions in the lumber market in general.

Lumbering, like mining, is destined to decline further; for privately owned timber has usually been harvested without thought of conserving a future supply. But in the mountains to a far greater extent than in other wooded areas the timber is within the bounds of national forests. Here only mature timber is permitted to be cut; the smaller trees are protected against fire and other dangers as a source of mature lumber in the future. National forests are found in practically all the Mountain counties, and in many of them form a large proportion of the area. Lumbering on a decreasing scale can therefore be counted on as one of the lasting industries of many Mountain regions.

AGRICULTURE

The farmers of the Mountain districts have to struggle against several handicaps. They suffer from the difficulty and the cost of transportation, but not quite so seriously as those who ship metals and lumber; for the farmers have limited local markets, and some have an additional outlet in a town or city accessible by train or truck.

The topography occasions difficulties for the farmers. It often limits the size of fields, or so shapes them as to render cultivation awkward. In some places neighboring heights throw the crops into shadow for part of the day. Where farms are on sloping ground, the grades make culture difficult and occasion frequent washing of the soil.

Another hindrance to agriculture is the high elevation of a large proportion of the Mountain territory. At some points the growing season is only three months, and at others is less than two months. This fact restricts the products that can be raised in the higher mountains. A late frost in spring or an unusually early frost in the fall not infrequently does considerable damage. Most of the crops are raised on fields less than a mile in altitude, though higher up many cattle and sheep are pastured, especially during the summer.

A third obstacle to mountain farming is the scarcity of summer rainfall. Much of the Mountain territory low enough for cultivation lies in the rain-shadow belt. Other Mountain dis-

tricts, especially among the Sierra Mountains, have plenty of precipitation, but it comes almost altogether in winter and early spring, so that crops cannot be raised without irrigation. Fortunately here, and in many rain-shadow districts as well, irrigation is easy, owing to the presence of streams bringing water from the rains and accumulated snow of the higher peaks. In many a mountain hamlet under a snow-clad mountain, a murmuring streamlet flows in a ditch along the roadside and through outlets into green gardens and fields. Some of the irrigation is conducted by large formal enterprises. Much of it, however, consists simply in diverting water from a stream into a field along the bank. In Montana, at least, the farm to which water was diverted first has prior claim, and land values vary with the water-rights involved. Another very simple form of irrigation consists of impounding the water of spring freshets in a cistern or hollowed-out place in the ground at an elevated point, and leading the stored water through ditches to the fields when it is needed.

Still another factor that makes mountain farming precarious is the fluctuating character of the mining and lumbering industries. When a mine closes or a sawmill shuts down, people go away, and the farmer loses local customers. At the same time the chances of supplementing the farm income by outside work are diminished. At such times farms are sometimes abandoned.

The chief agricultural productions of the mountains are live stock; forage crops; grains, especially wheat; potatoes; and small amounts of vegetables, designed like the wheat and some of the potatoes for home and local consumption. Districts near markets specialize in dairy and poultry products; and some in particularly favorable situations raise considerable fruit.

Handicapped as it is, the agriculture of the mountains cannot be expected to be very prosperous. That the presupposition is justified is borne out by the following signs. In 1925 the average value of farm land was only about thirteen dollars per acre; the proportion of farms operated by tenants was only 16.1 per cent; and the average income from farm sales per acre was only \$3.00 in the Central Rocky Mountains and only about \$4.50 in the Southern Rockies. Yet in spite of handicaps and low returns agriculture seems likely to be carried on in the mountains as long as other occupations retain among them mouths to be fed.

NATIONAL FORESTS

The presence of national and state forests and their guardians in Mountain districts not only safeguards a permanent supply

of lumber, but also affords several other local advantages. The forests protect the water-supply. They render possible the supervision of grazing lands, which are leased to stock-raisers. They give the settlements protection from forest fires. They furnish facilities for recreation and health. Ten per cent. of their receipts are expended in the construction and maintenance of roads and trails within their boundaries. And finally, one-fourth the income of each forest is turned over to the county or counties in which it lies to be used for roads and schools. A very large proportion of the Mountain counties are so fortunate as to have one or more of these national forests within their boundaries.

ENGINEERING ENTERPRISES

The swift mountain streams have in some cases been utilized as the source of electric power. In the Mountain counties of California four-fifths of the homes are wired for electricity—a fact strangely contrasted with the many crude, primitive aspects of life there. In the Rocky Mountains, also, large power-plants are in operation. These bring a few men of technical training into mountain hamlets.

The construction of a power-plant is often an engineering enterprise on a large scale. Other works of similar or even larger proportions sometimes found in the mountains are railway tunnels, and dams for reservoirs in connection with city water-works or with irrigation projects. Such building operations involve the sudden assembling of a community of laborers and technical men, who disperse when the task is completed.

TOURISTS

Tourists are attracted to the Mountain districts by many unparalleled natural attractions. The mountains of Colorado, for example, have the following:

Forty-three peaks over 14,000 feet high.

Fifteen national forests with an area of over 20,000 square miles.

Six thousand miles of trout streams.

Two large national parks and four national monuments.

Lakes.

Glaciers.

Three hundred curative springs.

Indian ruins.

Abandoned mining camps.

Many kinds of picturesque natural scenery, including ravines, mountains, lava beds, and examples of erosion.²

² *Colorado Highways*, May, 1929.

California, in addition to many of the above items, boasts her—

Yosemite Park.

Volcano.

Big trees.

Five hundred miles of trout streams in a single county.

Montana and the other mountain states have similar attractions. Hunting, fishing, camping and boating are abundant throughout the mountains. In all these states camping grounds are provided in national parks and forests. Many private camps are also run by individuals as commercial enterprises. The California county visited had twenty-four private camps besides twenty-eight camps in the national forest. Supplying the wants of the visitors affords numerous other opportunities for making a living. Many a decadent hamlet in the mountains is largely supported by filling stations, cafes, rooming-houses, hot-dog stands and little stores for the sale of candy, picture post-cards, fishing-tackle, and curios. The Montana county surveyed, one in which tourists are less numerous than in many other Mountain districts, has an annual income from tourists of \$150,000.³ This source of income, in contrast to mining and lumbering, seems likely to increase in importance with the passage of time.

MOUNTAIN PSYCHOLOGY

The people of these western mountains were reported to be different in some respects from the rest of the world. Being in part descended from the Forty-niners or other gold-seekers, they may well have inherited along with the hardihood and enterprise of their forebears, something of the gambler spirit of that early day; of its independence, of its fearlessness, and of its lack of religious traditions. Then, too, the ancestors of the present population were not as a rule the successful miners, who at the slump took their gains and went away; rather they were the incorrigible prospectors, the unsuccessful miners who had no money to carry them elsewhere, and persons of other occupations who had struck root in the soil.

Moreover, the isolation of the mountains, in the opinion of competent judges, has affected the disposition of the people. The shyness developed in lonely places has already been mentioned.

³ *Montana: Resources and Opportunities* (Helena; Montana Department of Agriculture, Labor and Industry, 1928), chapter on the county in question.

As is common in communities shut in to themselves, gossip is rife; and small offenses are brooded over and magnified. Again, social cliques are very exclusive. This may be illustrated by a typical remark. "Oh yes," said one country woman, "they think I'm good enough to give a cake for the sale, though I'm not good enough to belong to the Jolly Dozen." Local jealousies, too, often split the community. A young woman who had conducted fifteen church vacation schools in Montana told the investigator that such divisions were present in all the communities in which she had worked. The original occasion for the quarrel had usually been rivalry in an election to the school board, membership in which was a much coveted honor.

From their bare and restricted lives the people seek escape partly in the outdoor sports so accessible to them, but more often in dancing and drinking. The example of the many recreationists frequenting the mountain resorts has its effect. Places for the sale of liquor, camouflaged none too carefully as lunch-rooms, pool rooms, hotel offices, and so on, are present in practically all the centers. The Saturday-night dance seems to be a general institution. Though distraction is eagerly pursued in several other types of area studied, denominational superintendents having responsibility for a wide range of territory believed that "dancing and booze" were particularly common in the mountains.

The most striking peculiarity of mountain psychology is defiance of conventions. The people who have lived for several generations out of touch with the standards of the outside world, tend to despise and defy all conventional standards, whether of beauty, culture, dress, language, law or ethics. Working clothes are good enough for the store or the rare preaching service. Even high-school girls, who are usually so conventional, appear on school platforms in soiled or unfashionable garments without apparent embarrassment.

One of the conventions the mountain people frequently defy is the ban against swearing. Drab and stereotyped swear words come readily from the lips not only of men but of nicely dressed women, even in such public places as stages and lunchrooms.

Transgressions against civil or moral laws they easily condone, whether in themselves or in their neighbors. "If a man gets drunk," the investigator was told, "he would as soon everybody knew it." "We only do what people back in Alabama, where I came from, would do if they were not afraid to," a cynical remark made to the investigator, expresses an attitude that seems to be common.

On the other hand, the people of the mountains care very much for manliness and honesty and directness. An observant teacher said to the investigator, "In the mountain towns honesty, straightforwardness and brutal frankness are more prominent than elsewhere." The tendency to "brutal frankness" is the more striking because to anyone in any kind of trouble that they can understand, these people show great generosity and kindness. Where there is sickness, crop failure, or loss of a home by fire, they hasten to assist, poor and busy as they are themselves.

THE CHURCHES

The early settlers of the Mountain sections were in large proportion people without religious antecedents. Though churches were organized, these were never very strong; and some have died, and many others have lingered as weak and uninfluential groups.

PROPORTIONS OF CHURCH-MEMBERS

In 1926, less than a quarter of the people of the forty-four sample Mountain counties were members of the churches. In half the counties the proportion was less than one-fifth; and counties with this proportion of church-members covered half the area and contained more than half the people. Eight counties had less than one-tenth of the inhabitants in the churches. Only one county had a proportion of church-members as high as the national average; and that county was very small, covering only 1 per cent. of the area and containing only one in 500 of the people.

THE CHURCHES OF A TYPICAL MOUNTAIN COUNTY

One of the Mountain counties surveyed, which is situated in southwestern Montana, has an area of 3,622 square miles, which is three-fourths the size of Connecticut. It is divided by a high mountain ridge into two valleys, one of which is partly subdivided by a smaller mass of mountains. Mining, which was the principal industry, has recently declined, and in consequence population has also diminished.

Like the population, the number of church-members has decreased. Between 1916 and 1928, while the number of Roman Catholics became larger, the membership of all but one of the five Protestant denominations represented in the county in 1916 declined.

In 1928, only about one in fourteen of the inhabitants was a member of any of the sixteen churches; and of the country people, only one in twenty-one. The average weekly attendance at

preaching services, counting both Protestants and Catholics, was eighty-three, which was only twelve per thousand inhabitants; and the average size of the congregations was about fourteen. Even the Catholics, in most sections so faithful in attendance, were irregular here. At the largest Catholic church there might be fifty present one Sunday and only five the next.

Three-fourths of the families of the county had no regular contacts with churches, either by membership, attendance, contribution or the enrollment of children in Sunday school.

Leaving out of account the children of a large home for orphans which had its own Sunday school, the Sunday-school enrollment was less than one-fourth the school population. One public school had a course in week-day religious education, taught by one of the clergymen.

With shrinking Protestant church-membership, the average number of members per Protestant church, never large, had become only twenty. The largest Protestant church had only forty-nine members; and six of the ten Protestant churches had fewer than twenty-five members each.

Moreover, six Protestant churches had been closed since 1916, and another Protestant church and a Catholic church had been closed a little earlier; so that in 1928 there were half as many closed churches as there were active and semi-active churches.

These sixteen churches of the county, including the Catholic churches, were found in only nine communities; six small centers had no active churches. The only church in the county-seat had for three months in summer a student preacher resident in another community, and even that not every year; the rest of the time it had only Sunday school and an occasional service in charge of a lay reader or a clergyman who had three churches of his own and the responsibility for a wide parish.

A Methodist minister and a Catholic priest were resident in different communities of the western valley, and an Episcopal clergyman in the eastern valley. As each could not pass the mountains in winter, the church or churches for which he was responsible in the other valley were at best seasonal. Two preachers came from outside the county, but only for monthly or semi-monthly services. Even in summer only one church had preaching services every week.

At least eight church edifices in the county were substantial buildings, several of them being really beautiful. Two had been erected by native sons as memorials, and others by local subscriptions supplemented by home-missionary funds. Three of these excellent buildings were used only part of the time and a

fourth had not been opened since a funeral two or three years previous.

The general indifference to the churches implied in the low proportions of the people that were members and attendants was borne out by the way people talked about the churches. Here are a few of the remarks made to the investigator:

By a business man, asked for information about the local church services, in a sneering tone: "You've come to the wrong person. Ask some of the women."

By another business man, in a different locality: "We don't care much about churches. We think we get along just as well without them, in this world at least." He added, jocularly, "I don't know how it will be in the next."

By an official whose field was the whole county:

It is a noticeable thing true all over the state that people don't seem to be so much interested in churches as elsewhere. They appreciate a preacher at a funeral. As to going regularly to church, they won't do it. I wouldn't say they were less religious than others; when it comes to following the Golden Rule, you can't beat them.

Everyone here believes in a Supreme Being. They do not believe in the old-time heaven and hell. They meet dangers in the course of their work without a thought of their own safety. They figure if they follow the Golden Rule they are all right.

But there is a reaction. People begin to see the need of religious education for children.

A woman Sunday-school worker:

We have had enough of ministers coming just to preach. What we need is a resident minister working hard and his family working hard too. People are forgetting everything about church. The less we have in a religious way the less we care for it.

An old man, formerly for ten years superintendent of a little country Sunday school: "The church is done."

Was the church situation in the county just described characteristic of that prevailing throughout the Mountain territory? In the proportion of the population in the church-membership, the county stood about midway among the forty-four rural Mountain counties of the sample. And in several respects—church buildings, distribution of churches and ministerial service—it was better off than the average county in a similar environment.

This will be evident from glances at a few other Mountain counties. County A, which adjoins the county considered above, was similarly divided by mountain ranges into several valleys. Its area was considerably larger. In 1921, when it was surveyed

for the Institute of Social and Religious Research by Miss Helen O. Belknap, it had ten churches, of which six were at the county-seat and the remaining four in three other centers. Several small centers had Sunday-school or preaching services, either Protestant or Catholic; but thirteen communities, in which lived nearly a quarter of the people, had no Protestant ministry; and nine communities, containing one-sixth of the people, had no religious ministry whatever. The three Protestant churches outside the county-seat had seven, eight and ten members. They were poor weak churches, all whose constituents lived within a very short distance of the church building. Clergymen were resident only at the county-seat and at one other point. Miss Belknap wrote of this county that it "grew up before the church had made much headway," adding, "Men class churches among those feminine luxuries with which a real, red-blooded man has little to do."⁴

Another Mountain county, included in the same study as the county referred to above, is situated in northeastern Washington, and will be called here County B. Of the church situation there, Dr. Edmund de S. Brunner writes:

We find the church with organized congregations in only one-third of Pend Oreille's communities and with only 12 per cent. of the population within the membership of any church, Protestant or Catholic.⁵

A few pages farther on Dr. Brunner writes:

There is much territory within the county not included in the boundaries of any church parish. . . . Three of the village churches barely extend their activities beyond village limits. Two, however, do take in some of the surrounding countryside. Many of the communities are entirely untouched save for the organization of a Sunday school.⁶

County C, in the Mountain region of California, is another large county, being bigger than Rhode Island and Delaware combined. It has no railway in or near it. Its five churches, three Congregational and two Roman Catholic, are all in three localities; the county-seat, and two centers twelve and twenty miles away. Both the young minister that serves the three Congregational churches and the priest in charge of the two Catholic churches live at the county-seat. At least 1,300 people live outside the areas served by churches, in many narrow valleys which contain at least thirteen little hamlets.

⁴ *The Church on the Changing Frontier* (New York; Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1922), p. 58.

⁵ *A Church and Community Survey of Pend Oreille County, Washington* (New York; Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1922), p. 35.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

For County D, also among the mountains of California, the *Census of Religious Bodies: 1926* reported four Roman Catholic churches with 425 members, one Baptist church of thirty-nine members, and four Methodist churches with twenty members all told. No Baptist church was found for any community of the county in the latest Baptist *Minutes*; and the superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal district to which the county belongs told the investigator in 1929 that the only Protestant ministry was given by a Methodist minister in an adjoining county who was released for two or three days each month to go into County D and do house to house work at four points.

As the only railway service is from two branch lines barely entering the county from the opposite direction from the county where the minister lived, and as the county is crossed by a range of mountains, this minister, though he drove as far as sixty miles from home, was unable even to visit all the villages, to say nothing of serving the isolated mountain valleys. The priest at the county-seat was the only resident clergyman in the whole area of 923 square miles.

County E, with five agricultural valleys, in an area nearly equal to that of County B, had in 1926 two Roman Catholic churches with a combined membership of twenty-five without resident priest, and no Protestant church. And County F, with at least three communities, had no church and no clergyman, either Catholic or Protestant.

County G, in the southern Rocky Mountains, is three-fourths again as large as Rhode Island. Part of the people live in eleven small centers, of which nine are on the railroad from Denver that crosses the county; more than half the inhabitants live in the country. In 1926 this county had eight churches: a Roman Catholic church and seven Protestant churches of five different denominations. In 1926 the Roman Catholic church had a membership of twenty-seven, and not one of the Protestant churches had as many as twenty-five members. A denominational official said to the investigator:

The people that moved to the county either never cared for church or have discarded such interests and have taken up a care-less life. The craze for dancing is prevalent here, as all over the Mountain country.

A contrasting situation is found in County H. Besides two Roman Catholic churches without resident priest, which had thirty-four members between them, it had in 1926 only a single Protestant church, Presbyterian, with a membership of forty-six, which was situated at the county-seat. This church had a resi-

dent minister, who was trying to serve also, either by preaching or through a little Sunday school, seven of the nine centers outside the county-seat. The distances he covered were tremendous, considering the difficulties of travel in Mountain districts. On some Sundays he drove from his first appointment at the home church, fifty-five miles to hold a second service; then on thirty-five miles to a third; and finally back thirty-five to a fourth. At the date of the 1929 Presbyterian *Minutes*, however, this hard-working minister had left, and his place was vacant.

County I, also in Colorado, had in 1926 a Catholic church with a non-resident priest. The only Protestant church was an inactive organization of six members.

CHURCHLESS COMMUNITIES

The mountains contained many entirely neglected districts. Here are two instances where after years of neglect, work had just been begun.

Dr. L. L. Loofbourow, superintendent of the Redwood-Shasta district of the Methodist Episcopal Church, called attention in his annual report for 1928 to the Klamath River Valley, along which, far away from railroads, were strung for over 150 miles fourteen little communities with a total population of some two thousand people. The whole long valley had had no churches; and the only church building had been a Roman Catholic church in which mass was held but once a year. Through Dr. Loofbourow's influence, a log church had recently been built in one of the communities by a group of ministers on vacation; and a missionary had been sent there.

A woman minister interviewed was preaching at a tough little railroad hamlet in Montana where the people had declared that they did not want services, and where the audience at first did not know the Lord's prayer.

Many Mountain localities somewhat like these two still lack religious ministry.

Certain of the kinds of Mountain communities described earlier in this chapter were almost always without a church. These included the following:

Decadent mining towns. Some of these have abandoned churches. In some a weak church or two receive a limited amount of service, made possible through home-missionary aid. The Montana county visited has six centers of this class, only two of which were receiving any religious ministry at the time of the survey, although three others had abandoned churches.

Logging camps. Owing to their transient and seasonal char-

acter, sustained religious work had not been attempted for those in the counties surveyed.

Lumber-mill communities. In some of these, lumber companies have erected little church buildings. Leadership being usually lacking, however, little is done in a religious way except through union Sunday schools, which are often intermittent.

Resort communities. In the short summer season, religious ministry is not usually afforded.

Hamlets along railroads, the home of section men and their families. In such places few people show any desire for religious services.

Small isolated valleys among the mountains. The people of these valleys are so few and so scattered that ministry to them would be extremely difficult.

GENERALIZATIONS

Many Denominations

Religious ministry of a sort is offered to the people of Mountain sections by many denominations and faiths. In the forty-four rural Mountain counties of our sample, there were represented in 1926 sixteen Protestant denominations, the Roman Catholic and the Greek Orthodox Churches, and the Latter Day Saints. The only coördination attempted by any of these bodies is of a negative sort. In two states certain Protestant denominations have agreed to allocate a given place exclusively to one of their number, but no concerted, comprehensive policy or program of a positive nature has been undertaken or considered.

Few Churches

Again, the churches are few. In 1926 the forty-four rural Mountain counties of the sample had a church only for each 188 square miles of area, although in the rural counties of Ohio, where the level contour of the land made it easy to go much farther to church than in the mountains, there was a church for every seven square miles. In ten Mountain counties, moreover, there was only one church for from 250 to 500 square miles; and in six counties, for more than 500 square miles.

In relation to population, the Mountain counties of the sample taken collectively had in 1926 an average of 395 inhabitants to a church and eight counties had more than 500 inhabitants to a church. Because most of the communities are very small, the average population even of incorporated centers being only 369; because they are isolated, so that few people are likely to attend church in a locality other than their own; and because the churches tend to be grouped in the larger centers; the small

number of churches in proportion to the number of inhabitants means that many small centers and extended country districts have no church within reach.

Small Churches

Furthermore, the Protestant churches are small. In 1926 the average membership of the 317 in the sample counties was fifty-three. In contrast, the 172 Roman Catholic churches had an average membership of 110, and the forty-two organizations of Latter Day Saints, of 289. Among the churches the membership of which could be inferred from the Religious Census data, three-fifths had fewer than fifty members, and one-third had fewer than twenty-five members: only one in eight had as many as 100 members. Situations similar to that in County G, where not a single one of the seven Protestant churches had in 1926 as many as twenty-five members, are only too common in the Mountain sections.

Inadequate Funds

Churches so small, as was shown in connection with the Grazing country, cannot command funds adequate for the conduct of effective work. Not only do the mountain churches have few members; but since most of the churches are in small, isolated communities, it is almost a physical impossibility for them to have many contributors. Most of the members and most of their neighbors are poor. And even if they had money to spare, few of them would give it to a church.

Popular Indifference

For very few of the people care a rap about churches. Most of them have not had religious antecedents. Some of those who have, coming where the churches offer little that appeals to them and where public opinion exerts no pressure in favor of church-going, have fallen into the habit of non-attendance, and have gradually lost interest in religious matters.

This is true not only of the general public but of the members of the churches themselves. Total average attendance in 1928 was less than half as great as resident church-membership; and some of the church officers seemed to be rather ashamed of their connection with a church.

Ill-Adapted System of Ministerial Supply

The churches of the Mountain districts, like those of the Grazing country, are trying to apply methods adapted to utterly different conditions. Even the full-time resident minister system

is in force for some churches of larger villages. Two of the four clergymen resident in the county-seat of County A, for example, were full-time men, though nine communities in the county had no religious ministry. But so many Mountain communities are small that it is more common to group two or more churches, usually more than two, under the charge of one minister. In regions where the barriers between communities are so serious, this plan does not work very well. Going from one point to another by train often means night travel and waiting long hours at junctions, with consequent waste of time and energy. Travel by automobile involves fatigue and risk of accidents, even in the seasons when motor travel is practicable. And churches situated on the other side of a mountain range from the parish in which the minister responsible for them lives have to be closed in winter for four or five months together.

Under the circuit and yoked church systems, moreover, the ministers tend to be grouped in the larger places, where the churches are strong enough to pay larger proportions of the joint salary. This results in leaving large areas, containing many small communities, with no resident minister. Such areas include some entire counties, several of which are among those described above.⁷

Poor Quality of Ministers

Because the churches could pay only low salaries they frequently accepted as ministers superannuated men, students, or men that for some reason richer churches did not want. A denominational superintendent in describing a minister whom he considered typical of many preachers in the mountains, said, "He has neither vision nor push. He sits at home and broods over his difficulties." Pastorates, too, were often very brief. Yet some of the mountain ministers were devoted and hard-working men.

OUTLOOK

Finally, the prospects for the future of the churches do not seem bright. Although in the nineteen counties whose boundaries had not changed since 1900, taken all together, the proportion of church-members in the population rose a little between 1906 and 1926, the gain was made in a minority of the counties; and the proportions for ten of the separate counties dropped more than 10 per cent. in the twenty years. In some instances the decline was serious. For two counties, for example, the propor-

⁷ See pp. 136-139.

tions in 1926 were about one-half what they had been two decades earlier; for another county, but a third; for another, only a fourth; and for still another only about a seventh. In the Montana county surveyed, as has been said above, there were half as many dead churches in 1928 as churches still functioning. There has long been a tradition of ineffectiveness and indifference in relation to churches; and the morale of such church workers as there are, is in many places decidedly low.

In secular lines there are indications of an assured and in some respects an ascending future. Isolation is being mitigated by improved roads, automobiles, trucks, new railway lines, radio, and the influence of soldiers of the World War. Grazing, lumbering, a limited amount of mining, and growing tourist industries give promise of a continued livelihood. Schools are being improved; and in spite of the topographical barriers, some progress has been made in the consolidation of schools. The Mountain districts seem likely to continue to be inhabited. Yet the physiographic conditions are such that the communities will be small, and a considerable degree of isolation will remain, especially during the long winters. If Mountain districts are to have a permanent religious ministry enlisting a larger proportion of the people, this must therefore be adapted to mountain conditions.

SUMMARY

Mountain counties occupy an area equivalent to that of New England and the Middle Atlantic states combined, and had in 1920 a population of well over half a million. The larger proportion of the people are grouped in small communities; part of them are scattered in mountain valleys. Both communities and scattered families are singularly isolated from one another and from the world outside the mountains. Poverty is general and stringent. Development is recent in some counties and in a still larger proportion has been arrested at an early stage.

Church work of a sort is attempted by many ill-coördinated denominations. Standardized systems of ministerial supply, which place several churches in the care of one minister, are ineffective because of the barriers isolating the different communities. The existing churches are few, small and poor. They enlist but low proportions of the people in their membership and activities. The general public and even some of the church-members show little respect for the churches and are indifferent to religion.

Chapter VI

CUT-OVER DISTRICTS

In the Cut-over lands there is greater poverty than in any of the other areas covered by this study; and the people and the churches there face difficulties not encountered elsewhere. In recent years these districts were all stripped of the forests which were their greatest and most merchantable source of wealth, and each was left a wilderness of stumps when the woodsmen finished their work and passed on. Now there are comparatively few families scattered over the territory, and the struggle for a living is peculiarly hard.

Cut-over areas are very extensive in several parts of the United States. The Cut-over areas of the South were not covered by this study. Those in the Great Lakes region and in the Pacific Northwest, taken together, include virtually the whole of a hundred counties and parts of many adjoining counties. The hundred counties entirely Cut-over, alone cover more than 120,000 square miles. Their area is therefore equivalent to that of the Middle Atlantic states with Vermont, Massachusetts and Connecticut added. They had in 1925 a total population of nearly two million people, and a rural population of about one and a sixth millions.

The Great Lakes area includes two contrasting kinds of territory: that found especially but not exclusively in the northern part of the lower peninsula of Michigan, where agricultural development is static or declining; and that found chiefly in the northern parts of Wisconsin and Minnesota, where agriculture is progressing.¹ These two kinds of territory, and that of the Pacific Northwest, exemplified by the Cut-over districts of western Washington, are here considered; especially, of course, with respect to conditions that seem to affect the Church.²

¹ The Cut-over areas of the upper peninsula of Michigan were partly of one of these two kinds and partly of the other.

² Some account of the sample of Cut-over territory is given in Appendix III, as is a statement regarding the counties surveyed.

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS

POVERTY

The outstanding characteristic of these areas is poverty. In all three the people suffer from serious economic handicaps. The virgin timber was almost universally cut solely for immediate profits, with no reference to continued production. Second-growth trees, as a rule, were harvested as soon as they were big enough to bring any return, the annual growth being only one-fourth as great as the annual consumption.³ As the trees became exhausted, sawmills were moved or closed and some of the wood-working factories stopped operation. This meant fewer jobs, a shifting and often a declining population, fewer people to buy the crops of the farmer and the goods in the stores, and a lower assessed valuation.

Furthermore, farming encountered serious difficulties. It was necessary to get rid of the stumps; and this work was very hard, especially where there had been pine forests. Some of the land had to be drained as well as cleared. Much of the clearing was done at odd times by men working in the woods or factories. After all that back-breaking labor, much of the land proved to be barren. Markets were not readily accessible. The average income from farm sales was low. Some farms were abandoned.

Another unfortunate factor in the economic situation is the frequency of fires. They start easily in the slash left by logging and spread fast. They hinder reforestation, hurt the soil for farming, and often burn farms and villages. When factories are burned they are rarely rebuilt.

SPARSELY SETTLED DISTRICTS

All three Cut-over districts also have considerable tracts that are very sparsely settled. A very small part is still in virgin timber; a far larger amount is in second-growth woods; no inconsiderable stretches are wastes of blackened stumps; still other sections are in swamp; and parts have abandoned farms. In some sections the soil is so evidently sterile that no attempt had been made to cultivate it. Other lands are fertile but have not yet been reclaimed for agricultural purposes. Such uninhabited districts naturally tend to thin out the population of the section in which they lie. But no extended area is entirely without inhabitants, and the total population of the sparsely settled districts is considerable.

³ L. C. Gray and others, "Utilization of Our Lands for Crops, Pasture and Forests," *Yearbook of Agriculture*, 1923, p. 451.

ISOLATION

Nevertheless there is unusual isolation, as the people of the Cut-over regions are separated from one another by barriers of two kinds: topographical barriers and racial barriers. The isolating effect of the various kinds of uninhabited territory is intensified by the sparsity of roads and the poor quality of those that do exist. Detours of many miles are often necessitated by uninhabited sections, by marshes, or by long reaches of river without bridges or of woods lacking roads.

The population of the Cut-over regions is unusually diverse in racial composition. Many immigrants have been attracted by the comparative cheapness of the uncleared land. A small tract here is within the means of those unable to buy land elsewhere. Moreover, the foreign-born are of many different races.

RECENCY OF DEVELOPMENT

Finally, all these Cut-over lands are new. Extensive logging in the Great Lakes region did not begin till shortly before the Civil War; and in the Pacific Northwest, not till more than twenty years later. Several factors have worked against rapid development: many lumbering settlements were so transient that in them few settled institutions were attempted; and the majority of the farm families had and still have a hard struggle to live while they clear their land and make themselves homes.

For these reasons and others, the local units of government, starting with no equipment, find it hard to raise money for making roads, bridges, government buildings, public utilities, and all the endless machinery of civilization, and for running the government and maintaining law and order. It is necessary to maintain schools and long stretches of road for a very few families; the traditions of the lawless, violent days of the lumber-jacks, close behind in the near past, affect the standards both of living and of conduct; and because the people are of such diverse origins and races, so new to the place and to one another and so preoccupied with getting a bare livelihood, they have not even become acquainted, still less have they acquired the habit of working together in common institutions. Except in the larger centers, social organizations are few and do not have a large circle of influence.

Like other social organizations, the churches are weak and uninfluential. They enlist but small proportions of the people in membership and in attendance. Most of them are small groups, serving publics limited by race, by denomination and by

narrow neighborhood or community boundaries. In none of the three Cut-over regions have the churches or ministers, with very few exceptions, acquired a strong influence, or even won the respect of the people.

The common characteristics of the Cut-over regions, then, are those already familiar to us in other kinds of territory, namely: poverty, sparsity of population, isolation and lack of mature development.

POORER AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS OF THE GREAT LAKES

The poorer agricultural districts of the Great Lakes region, which is the oldest of the Cut-over areas, predominate in the northern part of the lower peninsula of Michigan. Similar districts are found in other parts of the Great Lakes Cut-over region.⁴

Till after the middle of the nineteenth century the whole region about the Great Lakes was covered with primeval forests. In some districts pine woods stretched for miles without underbrush or admixture of other trees. In other sections the forests were of hard-wood trees of various kinds, chiefly maples. When the timber close to settled country, for example in the North-eastern Highlands, long the source of commercial supply, was at last running short, lumbermen began to cut the forests in the accessible parts of both peninsulas of Michigan—that is, in those bordering on the lakes or adjacent to previously settled districts to the south. The pines, being in greater demand, were harvested first. In this area the pine trees grew by themselves in sharply defined districts. The first settlements were therefore among the pine forests; and the railways and roads were built to serve them. Development was rapid. In 1870 the value of the products of the lumbering districts of Michigan was nearly \$32,000,000. By 1890 the value of the annual production was over \$83,000,000. This was the great day of the lumberjacks, remembered for great feats of physical strength, legends of Paul Bunyan, and wild carousals in leisure hours. As the pines became exhausted in any district, the lumbermen turned their attention to the forests of hard-wood trees.

⁴That the same kind of territory predominates in one of the counties of the upper peninsula of Michigan is clear in "An Economic Survey of Chippewa County, Michigan," by W. E. DeVries, *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters*, Vol. VIII, 1927. That similar conditions are found in part of northeastern Wisconsin is evident from *Making the Most of Marinette County Lands*, published in 1929 by the Extension Service of the Wisconsin College of Agriculture.

DECLINING LUMBER INDUSTRIES

Between 1890 and 1900 the production of forest products declined. The number of wage earners in the lumber industries was cut in half, and the value of products in 1900 was only two-thirds of what it had been ten years previous. Michigan lost to Wisconsin her leadership in lumber production. The decline continued during the next two decades. Lumber industries produced less saw timber, and paid more attention to the utilization of smaller stuff from second-growth wood, such as pulp wood, fence posts, mine timbers, small wooden articles, cord wood and excelsior. For a time wood alcohol was an important article of export, but after 1920 this was replaced by a cheaper German substitute. Throughout this period almost without exception the woods were plundered with no thought except for immediate financial gain. As standing timber was then taxed annually, many owners could not afford to let it grow to maturity. Forest resources constantly both diminished and deteriorated.

This process was hastened by forest fires, which were more numerous and disastrous in this region than in either of the others. Parts were burned over four or five times. Repeated fires hardened the ground, destroyed the humus, endangered the remaining timber, killed the young growth, and left the ground liable to erosion. Eventually, large sections of the former pine lands would grow only huckleberries; and soil once covered with hard-wood forests, after repeated fires, produced only poplar and birch.

The waste of the natural wealth and the impoverished and precarious condition of the Cut-over districts began to claim public attention before the year 1900. State agencies were formed, conferences were held and surveys made. Measures were adopted to save what was left. Large districts of public land were appropriated for state and national forests. Precautions were taken to diminish the constant danger from forest fires. On limited tracts, reforestation was begun. And in 1925 taxes on land in growing timber were greatly reduced.

UNPROSPEROUS AGRICULTURE

Part of the land on which the trees had grown had been granted to railways to subsidize their construction, and had been sold by the railways to lumber companies; and part of it had been homesteaded, the trees upon it being disposed of to the lumber men. When the trees had been cut, most of the companies tried to sell their land; and state immigration bureaus and private land companies made efforts to attract settlers, often

selling small tracts on very easy terms. Some patches had been bought by lumberjacks, who cleared them at odd times. As elsewhere in the Cut-over districts, the low prices attracted immigrants. The cheapness of the land also drew the attention of investors in the Corn Belt and in cities all over the United States, who bought this cheap land as a speculation. Accustomed to much higher land values, they thought the land in this undeveloped country would eventually be worth several times the price they were asked to pay for it.

Many of the attempts to clear and cultivate the Cut-over lands ended in partial failure and often even in abandonment. The pine lands that had been the first to be cleared proved to be barren. Similar sterile districts are scattered in the other parts of the region, occupying, for example, one-third of a county in northeastern Wisconsin.⁵

The climate, too, presents serious obstacles to agriculture. Being far north, these lands have a short growing season, especially in the districts away from the lakes. Though the section is not arid, having about thirty inches of precipitation, the sandy soil of much of the area does not hold water well in the periods between rains, periods that are irregular and sometimes protracted. The declining activity of local lumbering industries combined with the distance from cities and the inadequate transportation facilities to make it difficult to market milk and other produce. The demand for hay, formerly exported from certain of these counties, has been eliminated by the substitution of automobiles for horses.

Considering these obstacles, it is not surprising that the average income from farm sales is unusually low. In only one of the Cut-over counties of lower Michigan was the average return per farm in 1921-1924 greater than \$1,250, and that county had but few farms. The average value of farm land, too, was unusually low. In four-fifths of the counties it was less than twenty dollars an acre in 1925, and in one-third the number it was less than fifteen dollars.

Another indication of the lack of agricultural prosperity is that only small proportions of the farms are operated by tenants. In 1925 very few of the counties had percentages of tenancy even as high as 15 per cent., and seven had percentages below 10 per cent. These figures are in strong contrast to the national average of 38.6 per cent. A farm can not support a family and also pay rent. In addition, the proportion of farms mortgaged is unusually high.

⁵ *Making the Most of Marinette County Lands*, p. 14.

Moreover, only small amounts of land were cleared for cultivation during the five years before the *Census of Agriculture* of 1925. Not only that, but much land once brought under cultivation has been abandoned. In one of the more sterile counties, which has been mapped by the Michigan Department of Conservation, there was as much land in abandoned farms as in farms that were being operated. Between 1910 and 1925 abandonment of farms outdistanced the occupation of new land in seven of these counties, and the number of farms remained practically unchanged in eight more counties; so that in only two counties in this section did the number of farms increase more than 5 per cent. Between 1920 and 1925 the decrease in number of farms was even more general.

PROFITS FROM VACATION SEEKERS

One source of profit that is increasing rather than decreasing in importance consists of recreation seekers, attracted by the cool summers, the hunting, fishing and berrying, and the chances for camping out. The movement has been stimulated by three regional development companies not for profit, which distribute attractive literature. The state system of trunk-line highways, in process of improvement, facilitates access to the section. Game reserves, national and state forests, fish hatcheries and similar institutions are designed to increase the safety and attractiveness of the northern woods. Nine such enterprises of a variety of kinds are found in a single one of the four little contiguous counties surveyed.

The summer visitors are a source of income to the inhabitants in two ways. They patronize hotels, boarding-houses, lunch-rooms, filling-stations and the like; and some of them buy land and erect camps, and therefore help the counties through the payment of taxes.

POOR COUNTY GOVERNMENTS

The counties need all the tax money they can get, for they find it hard to meet their expenses. A good many taxes go unpaid, in part on abandoned farms, in part on lands for speculation whose owners are no longer able or willing to pay taxes on them, and in part on lands whose owners find it extremely difficult to make ends meet. For the Wisconsin county for which figures are available, 25 per cent. of the taxes outside the incorporated centers were delinquent in 1925.⁶

Property on which the taxes are unpaid for five years is for-

⁶ *Making the Most of Marinette County Lands*, p. 5.

feited to the state. Before 1920, in the state of Michigan and almost entirely in the Cut-over part of it, there were forfeited 2,300,000 acres, an area equivalent to that of six counties of the standard size for the more recently organized part of the state. From this state-owned land, of course, no taxes were obtained. Three million additional acres paid no taxes in 1920. In all, no taxes were received that year from one-seventh of the area of the whole state. As this land was largely in the Cut-over districts, the proportion of the area from which the counties in question obtained no income was considerably more than a seventh. To obtain the required funds, it was necessary to raise the tax rate on the lands that did pay taxes. In Marinette County the rate was raised 68 per cent. between 1915 and 1928.⁷

Two things aggravate the situation by making expenses high. The small size of the counties makes it necessary to pay the salaries of several sets of county officials, and the maintenance of several sets of buildings and equipment, for an area that in most of the newer regions of the United States would be a single county with only one set of expenditures. And the thinly settled districts necessitated the maintenance of roads and schools for a very few people. The per-pupil cost of the Marinette County schools was more than a third higher for the year 1927-1928 than the average for the state.⁸ This situation obviously makes taxes higher for those who can pay, and thereby intensifies their private financial difficulties, thus decreasing any margin from which voluntary contributions to churches would be made if made at all.

LOSS OF POPULATION

Since both lumbering and agriculture have declined, some of the people have moved away. The loss of population is popularly supposed to be much greater than it really is. The investigator was told that it was as if the state had been tilted so that the people rattled down into the southern counties. It is true that seventeen of the twenty-three Cut-over counties of lower Michigan lost population during the decade between 1910 and 1920; but after all only three counties lost as much as one-fifth of their inhabitants, and none of them lost so much as one-third.

SPARSELY SETTLED DISTRICTS

The sparsely settled districts present in each of the kinds of Cut-over territory are here comparatively segregated and exten-

⁷ *Making the Most of Marinette County Lands*, p. 5.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

sive. In 1923, the northern part of the lower peninsula of Michigan contained 134 townships, with a combined area of 8,525 square miles, where less than 15 per cent. of the land was under cultivation.⁹ In such townships there could be very few farm families; yet there were a few. Only one of the twenty-three counties was without one or more such thinly settled townships. Four counties had not a single township where as much as 15 per cent. of the land was under cultivation. In the district surveyed seven-tenths of the area, more than 1,600 square miles, had fewer than six persons to the square mile; and in these sparsely settled districts lived one-seventh of the population, about 2,200 persons.

That the similar county in Wisconsin for which detailed information is available had also sparsely settled districts is evident from the enrollment of its rural schools. The county, 1,415 square miles in extent, had 103 rural schools. One-third of these schools had fewer than fifteen pupils each; two-thirds had fewer than thirty pupils apiece; and only three had enrollments of more than fifty pupils.¹⁰

BARRIERS

Several factors militate against close social integration.

Between Village and Country

Because the larger centers are situated in sterile districts, developed first because they had the pines, the farms are at a distance from the villages. Neither of the two villages in the district surveyed has any farms to speak of within several miles; and one was said not to have a single farm within ten miles. The interests of the village with its factories are distinct from those of the farmers. The farmers, on their side, absorbed in making a bare living, are unobtrusive in their relations to the villagers. Many of the roads are still poor, and detours are frequently necessary. In 1925, only two farms in the four counties surveyed were on hard-surfaced roads; and more than one-third were on unimproved dirt roads, both here and in the region in general. The distinction between villagers and farmers is therefore unusually marked. Even where roads have been improved and country people freely go to town for business and amusement, they have not as a rule assumed relations with the social institutions of the village.

⁹ Dot map prepared by the Michigan Department of Conservation.

¹⁰ *Making the Most of Marinette County Lands*, p. 8.

Around Communities of Special Types

Certain types of community have little social connection with their environment. Lumber camps stand each apart, except that some farmers work in them some of the time, and that on Sundays the lumberjacks rattle out in ancient cars to find amusement elsewhere. Many of these camps have shacks in which live the families of the workmen. At others the men alone live in bunk houses.

Another kind of isolated community is the decadent sawmill hamlet, inhabited by woods workers, sawmill hands, and in some cases a few store-keepers. But some such places do not even have a store.

Separating Racial Groups

The immigrants attracted by cheap land are chiefly from Canada, the British Isles and Germany, with some Scandinavians. Virtually all are of the earlier immigration. They tend to live in some approach to colonies, though the farms of two racial groups are sometimes intermingled to some extent. Groups of Mennonites, who though native-born have a strong inherited group-consciousness, are also present in one of the counties surveyed, as they are also in at least five other rural counties of the district.

THE CHURCH SITUATION

The proportion of the population enrolled in the membership of the churches in 1926 did not reach the national average in a single one of the sixteen Cut-over counties of lower Michigan. All but two counties had less than two-fifths of the people in the church-membership; ten counties had less than three-tenths; and five counties had less than a fifth. As for the district surveyed, in 1928 only one-eighth of the people were members of local churches; the average weekly attendance at church was slightly less than one-eighth of the population; and less than a quarter of the children and young people were receiving regular religious instruction.

Districts with No Church-members

In the four counties surveyed the degree of enlistment varied considerably from district to district. None of the districts with fewer than six inhabitants per square mile, which had a combined area of 1,600 square miles, had any churches within their borders; and fewer than 3 per cent. of the 2,200 people living in such districts belonged to churches in other communities of the four counties. There were no members of churches within these

counties at any of the seven lumber camps. The two decadent sawmill hamlets were equally destitute of churches and of church-members. A number of farming neighborhoods, several of which had abandoned churches, were also without members or adherents of active local churches.

A District with Few Church-members

Besides these places with no church-members, there were districts where though small churches were present they did not enlist more than a very low proportion of the people. A typical example covered more than half of one of the small counties visited and contained nearly half the population, about 1,250 souls. It included the little county-seat (a tiny village of white story-and-a-half cottages), a small hamlet (something of a summer resort), several farming neighborhoods, a lumber camp and a good many scattered farms. The soil was neither the best nor the very worst of the region. The people were struggling for existence, many living in log cabins, board shanties, or even tar-paper shacks. The county-seat had a train every day or two and a motor conveyance on the other days. The smaller center had formerly had a railroad; but when the logging had ended this had been taken out. Most of the farmers had been woods workers and still spent part of their time getting small stuff from the woods. They were largely Americans, with one colony of Finns and near them a few Swedish families. In spite of the general poverty, children were attending high school even from distant tar-paper shacks.

And how about the churches? There were four, all of a single Protestant denomination. They had respectively fourteen, seventeen, nineteen and six resident members. Most of the members were women: the church at the county-seat, for example, had only one male member besides the minister. Even allowing for fifteen members of churches in adjoining counties, not quite one in sixteen persons was a member of a local church.

Attendance at church services was small, averaging fifteen at the county-seat church, and only five at the hamlet church, except in summer, when the number was increased by a few visitors. Even some of the members had not been to church for years. Though three of the churches had home-mission aid, and the fourth had the same minister as two of the others, it was very hard to raise enough money to meet the running expenses, and much of this was obtained through suppers and sales, in which the church women were aided by those outside the churches. There were only one-eighth as many children in the

Sunday schools as in the public day schools. Country families having no sort of contact with these churches numbered 119 and included nearly 500 persons. One of the little churches, composed of Swedes and Finns, was just about to become inactive at the time of the survey.

A Contrasting District

The religious situation here was in strong contrast with that in the eastern end of the same county, where the soil was the best found in any section of the four little counties surveyed. The land had been more thoroughly cleared and it supported a far more prosperous agriculture. The people were largely Canadians and Germans, who had brought with them vital religious traditions, and had started and maintained strong churches of the faiths to which they adhered. There were four churches in the village and two in country neighborhoods. One of the latter served as a social center for its neighborhood, and also had a parochial school. In this side of the county three-eighths of the people were church-members; and the number of children receiving religious instruction was 55 per cent. of the day-school enrollment.

Another Pair of Contrasting Situations

An adjoining county furnished similarly contrasted situations. At the tiny county-seat a Catholic church of fourteen members and a Protestant church of five members enrolled between them less than 9 per cent. of the village population. One reason for the weakness of the Protestant church was declared to be that twenty years before a sectarian woman had taken advantage of an interregnum between pastorates to introduce a preacher of her own denomination, who had organized a church. The original denomination had withdrawn, but the intruding church had not won the suffrage of the people.

Not many miles away the best agricultural district of that county had been colonized by Mennonites. They had in different neighborhoods three churches, progressive, conservative and ultra-conservative or Amish. These churches had a large combined membership, and good attendance both at services of worship and at two Sunday schools. As in the previous instance, the more active church life was associated with greater prosperity, deep religious traditions, and the maintenance of strong churches.

Indifference to Churches

Outside the two districts with comparatively strong churches, the people in general showed lack of interest in the local churches,

not only by failing to join or attend them or to send children to Sunday school, but through slighting talk. A typical speech was the following: "People don't paternize churches much here. You can be just as good outside of them." And again, it was said of a certain family, "They used to go to church, but now like kittens they have got their eyes open."

That the depreciatory attitude towards churches may be in some degree a defense mechanism unconsciously adopted by persons too poor to contribute to them is suggested by another characteristic remark: "Every time I go to church they want money. I have none even for my family. So I don't go." However this may be, the churches have evidently not convinced the people unattached to them or even all their own members, that they have anything worth while to give.

If the local people find little to draw them to the churches, the summer people, many of whom are accustomed to efficient churches at home, are attracted even less; and very few of them attend any local church.

Small and Poor Churches

Almost all the churches are small. Being small and in a land of poor people, they can collect very little money for salary and running expenses, to say nothing of improvements on property. Naturally their buildings, with a few notable exceptions made possible through gifts from benevolent individuals or grants from home-missionary boards, are small and often in bad repair. The ministers that they can afford are not men in great demand for ability. The people, in fact, were much inclined to criticize their ministers. They would say, "He is lazy." "He pays more attention to some other interest than to his church work." "He goes to card parties." "He is tactless" or "indiscreet." "He does not understand the young people." "He cannot preach."

Small churches were numerous in 1926 throughout the Cut-over counties of lower Michigan. The average membership of all the Protestant churches in the area was only sixty-one. Of twenty-four churches alone of their denomination in their counties, half had fewer than fifty members. Weak Baptist churches were relatively twice as numerous in this region as in the rest of Michigan; weak Congregational churches were relatively three times as numerous as in the other parts of the state; and the rural Episcopal churches belonging to the Diocese of Michigan that fell within this area were all missions. The county with the lowest proportion of church-members had six Protestant churches of five different denominations, besides four

Roman Catholic churches and a small Mormon church. The largest of the Protestant churches had only fifty-one members, and three had fewer than twenty-five members each.

Preoccupation with Recreation

The small, ineffective churches have to contend not only with anxiety over making a living, but with preoccupation in leisure hours—which come almost wholly on Sunday—with various forms of recreation. People long for escape. The natural facilities of the region, developed for the vacationists, with Sunday games and movies, afford them abundant opportunities, which they can reach in the ancient automobiles possessed by almost every family. This tendency to seek amusement is strengthened by the example of most of the summer visitors, whom the natives see only on holiday while giving themselves up entirely to the pursuit of a good time.

BETTER AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS OF THE GREAT LAKES CUT-OVER REGION

The better agricultural districts of the Great Lakes Cut-over region, which are found for the most part in northern Wisconsin and northeastern Minnesota, resemble in many respects the type of area just considered, and will be described more briefly.

LUMBERING

The forests of the better agricultural districts, being farther west and somewhat farther north than those in lower Michigan, were harvested rather later. In both Wisconsin and Minnesota, however, the production of lumber began well before 1870, and the region where the stumps were still in evidence began to be cut by 1880 in the interior, and considerably earlier on the shores of the Great Lakes. Production was still large in 1900, when the output of the Michigan forests had seriously shrunk. After that date it fell off rapidly. But abundant forest products were still being gathered in 1928, chiefly from second-growth woods near railway shipping points. Several small portable sawmills were in operation. Many farmers were employed in the woods during the winter. The county visited, which was in northern Minnesota, had suffered less from forest fires than the district in lower Michigan. Nevertheless it had seen extended and destructive fires, and in common with the other Cut-over counties of Minnesota, it belonged to a special classification as regards insurance on dwellings, for which higher rates were charged.

AGRICULTURE

A much larger proportion of the soil of the Minnesota county surveyed than of the soil in lower Michigan was fertile; and there were no extended areas of barren land. Two large tracts, once the beds of glacial lakes, had been originally not in forest but in peat bog; and considerable parts of these had been drained by county ditches. Land in the main river valley was exceptionally fertile. Some of the original shacks and log cabins had been replaced by modern farm-houses. A good many big barns were in evidence, and others were being erected.

Instead of a land boom followed by considerable abandonment of farms, there had been slow but continuous development, which was still in progress in 1928. Throughout the region the number of farms had increased in almost every county, both between 1910 and 1920 and between 1920 and 1925. And much land was being cleared for cultivation. Of the twenty-nine counties in Minnesota and Wisconsin denominated *Cut-over* in the present investigation, twenty-six had more than 5,000 acres cleared, and sixteen of these more than 10,000 acres, between 1920 and 1925. The future of farming in the region seemed assured.

The farmers were still having a hard fight, however, to subdue the land. In none of the rural counties was the average farm income as much as \$1,000 a year; and in a third of them it was less than \$500. In three-fourths of the rural counties the average value of farm land was less than thirty-five dollars an acre. The percentage of farms in the hands of tenants was very low, and for several counties was less than 5 per cent. The proportion of farms mortgaged was even higher than in the Michigan districts, being well over half in all but two of the twelve rural counties. Apparently farmers were as much in need of funds to carry them through the years of development here as in lower Michigan; and their property was sufficiently valuable to enable them to borrow money on it more readily.

In one respect conditions are harder for the farmers than in the other section. The *Cut-over* district in Wisconsin and Minnesota lies several degrees farther north. In partial counterbalance to this, much of the district has a somewhat higher precipitation, and in all of it a larger proportion of the rainfall comes in spring and summer.

THE RESORT INDUSTRY

In the Minnesota county surveyed, as in lower Michigan, vacation-seekers form an important source of income. They are most numerous in the districts that have lakes. A large invest-

ment in the business has been made by local people, a considerable number of whom have built groups of attractive houses, which they let to summer visitors. They often also provide certain services, such as the preparation of meals and the letting out of boats. For persons thus occupied Sundays in summer are the busiest days in the week.

COUNTY FINANCES

Here as in lower Michigan the counties have difficulty in getting money for running expenses and improvements. In the county visited, taxes were delinquent in 1927 on 35 per cent. of the land; most of this being land held for speculation. The larger area of the county and the higher value of the farm land, however, afford a far greater total assessed valuation.

POPULATION

In contrast to the state of things in lower Michigan, population increased not only between 1910 and 1920, but in every rural county but one between 1920 and 1925 also. The area, however, was still thinly settled in 1928. The general density of the rural counties was 9.3 persons per square mile, and that of the open country was considerably less. Only about a quarter of the area of the rural counties taken together was in farms; and only a quarter of the county surveyed, though it was better developed than some of the others. Here, perhaps because of the effect of the absence of large sterile districts on the distribution of the country people, the township with the densest population was the one containing the county-seat, and the families were more generally distributed over the county. But while there were no absolutely uninhabited districts of miles in extent, isolated families were found in almost every township. Nearly two-thirds of the area had fewer than six persons per square mile. In such sparsely settled districts lived 5,579 persons, about one-third of the population of the county.

BARRIERS

The two most serious physical barriers are the distances and the bad roads. A great many families live a long way from any center; and the county-seat, which is by far the largest village, is near one corner of the big county. Gravel roads were being built; but in 1925 one-third of the farms were on unimproved dirt roads. These were very bad in spring and after rains.

There is no barrier between village people and the country people living near at hand. Farmers take a part in village social organizations as well as in their own farm-bureau branches. A

member of the Ladies' Aid Society of a village church said: "We look up to our farm women. They have better clothes than we do, and better automobiles. When we solicit for a church supper, they can give a chicken or a pint of cream." Only a small part of the farms, however, were within easy reach of a village.

Racial segregation was more important in northern Minnesota than in lower Michigan. From 13 to 31 per cent. of the population of the rural counties taken singly had been born outside of the United States. These were comparatively high percentages, as the proportion for the rural population of the United States as a whole in 1920 was only six and a half per cent. For social purposes, moreover, racial groups include to a large extent the children of immigrants. Persons of foreign stock, including with the foreign-born those both of whose parents were immigrants, formed in each of the twelve rural counties from three-tenths to over seven-tenths of the population; and in seven of these counties more than half the people were of foreign stock.

The immigrants are markedly diverse in their origins. For all but two of the rural counties more than twenty countries of origin were listed by the Census of 1920. They have come not only from the countries of northwestern Europe, but also from Czechoslovakia, Austria, Russia and other sources of the more recent immigration. In a typical county where one-fourth of the population was of foreign origin, the immigrants present in 1920 were distributed about evenly between the older and the newer immigrations.

The number of immigrants was on the increase. In twelve counties of northern Wisconsin there were over two-fifths more foreign-born farmers in 1920 than there had been in 1910.¹¹

Families of the same race tended to settle in groups; but several races were frequently represented in the same community. The usual state of things was illustrated in three communities of a Wisconsin Cut-over county. These communities had racial groups as follows:

- a. Norwegians, Swedes and Germans.
- b. Germans and Bohemians.
- c. Germans, Scandinavians, Poles and Bohemians.¹²

Groups of different races rarely combined in common social organizations, especially groups representing races from north-

¹¹ Data from Brunner, *Immigrant Farmers and Their Children* (New York; Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1929), p. 37.

¹² Fry, *The Old and New Immigrant on the Land* (New York; Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1922), pp. 42 and 46.

western Europe with groups representing races from southeastern Europe.

THE CHURCH SITUATION

The church situation resembled in most respects that in lower Michigan.

Low Ratios

As in the other section the rural counties had low proportions of church-members. Only one had a proportion above the general average for rural counties. For the others the proportions ran between about one-fifth and about one-third.

In the county surveyed only about an eighth of the inhabitants were members of local churches; only twenty-nine of the families had any contacts with churches; the average weekly attendance at services of worship was only one-tenth the population; and the number of minors in Sunday school was equal to only two-fifths of the school population.

Poorly Enlisted Districts

In the two-thirds of the area having fewer than six persons per square mile, less than 10 per cent. of the people were members of local churches. Eleven thinly settled townships had no church-members at all. Their combined area was 384 square miles, equivalent to one-fifth the area of the county; and in these townships lived 1,435 persons, one-twelfth the population of the county.

Small Churches

Of the forty-two churches in hamlets and open country, only six had as many as fifty members. Twenty-four had fewer than twenty-five members, and four additional churches were small groups of persuasions without membership rolls.

Racial Churches

About half the members of the forty-nine Protestant churches were in twenty-two racial churches. Four races were concerned, and the twenty-two churches had as members one-sixth of the persons of these four races in the county, a proportion slightly higher than the proportion of church-members in the population of the county in general. The race with the highest proportion of church-members was the German: about a third of those of German stock were in racial churches. The race having relatively the fewest church-members was the Finnish, only 6.8 per

cent. of those of Finnish stock being church-members. Many of the Finns were frankly atheistical.¹³

The churches for racial groups partly accounted for the number of small churches. Seventeen of the twenty-two racial churches had fewer than fifty members each, and eleven had fewer than twenty-five members.

Not only were there churches for racial groups, but in two communities people of the same race were divided between churches of two denominations. The race thus divided was Swedish in one instance and Norwegian in the other. The wisdom of division was beginning to be questioned; for one of the persons interviewed said, "If all would stick together, we could have a good church and support a minister." Three racial churches, indeed, combined persons of different races from northern Europe.

Several racial churches had been weakened by disagreement as to the language in which services should be held, the older members clinging to their mother tongue, and the young people preferring English. A few churches used English all or part of the time.

Factors Tending to Discredit Church Work

Several factors tended to discredit the churches in the opinion of the public. One of these factors was the large number of very small churches, unable because of their weakness and poverty to pay an able minister or to provide effective service. A particularly striking case consisted of a circuit of three churches in neighborhoods only a few miles apart, which had respectively five, five, and four resident members, and a combined average attendance of twenty-nine. The denomination these churches represented cannot have been proud of them; for neither they nor the name of their minister was entered in the statistical report. Within the three months preceding the survey three deaths had occurred in the area in which the three churches were situated. In each case some outside minister had been asked to take charge of the funeral. To this fact the minister had called attention at a prayer meeting. And both the fact and the minister's complaint were remembered and reported to the inves-

¹³ Since there had been little change in number of foreign-born, the calculations were based on 1920 census figures. The ratio of native-born of foreign parentage to foreign-born for the county was assumed to hold for each of the races. Two facts make the proportion of church-members, 16.6 per cent., rather too small; three churches had members of different races; and twenty Scandinavians, chiefly Swedes and Norwegians, had been converted to the Catholic Church.

tigator, by some one whose respect for churches had evidently not been increased by the episode.

Regular church work was also discredited by the efforts of voluntary preachers. Well-meaning but uneducated men saw places without religious ministry and volunteered their services as preachers. One of these, after failing as maintenance man on the roads had taken to peddling medicines. He was deaf and a poor speaker.

DOES THE CHURCH SYSTEM FIT THE ENVIRONMENT?

Is the church system of the two Cut-over sections near the Great Lakes—if system it can be called—adapted to a region of such extreme poverty? Help in answering this question may be drawn from a consideration of the kind of work that is being done in certain secular fields.

In all three of the states in which the Cut-over counties about the Great Lakes are situated, big public enterprises are being conducted, especially in connection with schools, roads, farms, and forests. In all these fields extended programs, usually covering the whole state and involving large annual expenditures, state and federal, are being administered efficiently by unified governmental agencies. The people of the Cut-over territory profit by the new roads, the consolidated schools, the fire protection, the parks and forests, the advice of the county agents. Improvements made each year keep these things before the attention of the public, especially as the papers and the radio spread the information.

In all these fields, moreover, the handicapped Cut-over counties are receiving from the state much more assistance than is given to richer districts. A few examples will illustrate this. The state of Minnesota pays 70 per cent. of the cost of building and maintaining state-aided county roads in her Cut-over counties, a higher proportion than in the other counties of the state. Both Michigan and Wisconsin give extra school appropriations to poor school districts. In at least two of the three states, departments of conservation have made surveys of certain Cut-over counties. A Wisconsin county investigated by the Department of Extension was to receive from the state in 1929 more than four times as much as it paid the state in taxes; and more than half of its road funds came from state and federal sources.¹⁴ In all these fields, the principle of equality of privilege was being put into practice through expenditures proportioned to need.

¹⁴ *Making the Most of Marinette County Lands*, p. 7.

In contrast to these secular agencies, the following things were true of the churches:

Operations were conducted by small local groups under the oversight of many different denominations, which were not coördinated in any way.

Activities were not guided by comprehensive policies.

The scale of operations was small, expenditures were comparatively slight, and efficiency was questionable.

Methods of church work had not changed with the times in anything like the degree observed in other fields.

Though doles of home-mission aid suggested a belief in aiding those in need of help, the amount expended did not render possible even a distant approach to equality of religious privilege.

The contrast between the secular agencies and the churches did not tend to raise the latter in public estimation.

THE CUT-OVER REGION OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

In comparison to the Great Lakes Cut-over districts, those of the Northwest were of much more recent development, and the processes both of destruction and of development were not so far advanced.

Areas partly forested, partly cut-over, extend throughout virtually the whole of western Washington and western Oregon and the coast counties of northern California, and are found also in the narrow northern end of Idaho. These districts present a wide variety of conditions. The largest section and the one where lumbering and the stump lands it leaves behind most strongly affect the environment of men, was western Washington, where a county was surveyed. This county is in the middle of the Olympic Peninsula, the large region between Puget Sound and the Columbia River, and has one of the few harbors on this part of the Pacific Coast. The conditions found were representative of most of the western part of Washington from the Cascade Mountains to the ocean, an area of about 24,500 square miles, which is more than equivalent to the combined area of Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island. Virtually the whole of this area has been recently logged off, and only a comparatively small proportion has been cleared. Even within a few miles of Seattle are wide stretches of stumps and young growth; and the hilly horizons have the ugly, gap-toothed effect of lands that have been partly cut and afterwards swept by fire. A few counties contain more patches cleared for farms than did others, and the different districts vary in degree of accessibility to large cities; but in many fundamental respects the region is

homogeneous. Statements about the county surveyed will be reinforced where practicable by statistics regarding those six among the nineteen counties of this district that in 1920 had no centers of more than 2,500 inhabitants.

PRIMEVAL FORESTS

This region had for centuries been receiving a great deal of rain. It includes, in fact, districts with higher rainfall than any other part of the United States. The county surveyed, though it does not include the very wettest section, has for the most part from eighty to one hundred inches of annual rainfall, enough to reach the ceiling of an ordinary bedroom. As the climate is mild as well as damp, trees grow rapidly and develop to large proportions. The virgin forests of fir, cedar, hemlock and other species, which showed many trees 200 feet high and four to eight feet in diameter near the base, were among the most wonderful in the world, and have afforded some of the most valuable supplies of timber produced anywhere on the planet.

DEVELOPMENT

The settlement of the county began about 1860 upon grassy stretches along the river near its mouth, and especially higher up the river valley in the eastern and southeastern parts of the county. This was long before the exploitation of these far-western forests began; the aim of settlers was to clear valley homesteads for agriculture. Soon after 1880 came the beginning of extensive logging operations. In the decade 1880 to 1890 the population of the county multiplied ten times. Thereafter the production of lumber and the growth of population steadily advanced.

LUMBERING

Conditions were well adapted to the marketing of the timber. The river which traversed the county from the southeastern corner to the ocean, with its three large tributaries, which drained the whole northern part of the county, carried the logs to several mill villages, or down to the harbor, where the factories of two adjoining cities cut them into boards, or utilized them in making wooden goods of various kinds. The lumber and wooden articles were then shipped either by railway or by water to markets in all parts of the world.

When the trees close to the streams had been exhausted, trains on temporary tracks brought logs from the hills to the river banks. By 1929 most of the lands visible to the traveller along

the roads, which largely followed the valleys, had been despoiled. But the streams of giant logs still flowed to the mills, coming now from less accessible hilly districts not previously tapped, from a national forest and an Indian reservation within the county, and from the forests of less developed adjoining counties. At the time of the survey, the recent introduction of a pulp mill, which utilized stumps and hemlock trees, had brought about renewed logging operations in the partly deforested districts.

The lumbering and the manufacturing industries based upon it formed the main foundations of the economic prosperity of the county. The size of the lumbering industries and the value of their products will be evident from a few facts published in a special issue of a local daily paper.¹⁵

The harbor cities contained seventy-one mills, shingle plants, pulp mills and other wood-working factories.

During the year just ended, 1,220,000,000 board feet of lumber had been shipped from the harbor.

The annual income from the lumber industries centering at the harbor was \$26,000,000.

More than 11,000 men worked on lumber in the woods and factories.

The wealth, however, was in the hands of the few owners. The laborers were poor. The wages of the loggers, for example, were from \$3.50 to \$4.50 a day. The men were much better off, however, than they had been ten years earlier. The logging companies provided better accommodations and better food. Since prohibition, too, the men spent more money on clothes. Wearing nicer clothes, they could seek better kinds of recreation, and more of them married and had homes of their own. Another factor making for local improvement was easier transportation by stage and train to points outside the county; so that instead of carousing in the centers and wasting their money, the men on vacation went to large cities or to distant homes. Bootlegging and vice still existed, but witnesses all agreed that the moral and economic status of the laborers had improved. They are still, however, engaged in hard and fatiguing manual labor, and they are poor.

AGRICULTURE

In comparison with the lumber industries, agriculture is little developed. In 1925 less than one-twelfth of the area of the county surveyed was in farms, and even lower proportions were

¹⁵ *The Washingtonian*, January, 1929.

in farms in two of the rural counties. Besides, the farms were small. The average size in the county visited was less than seventy-five acres, and closely similar averages characterized five of the six rural counties. More than three-tenths of the farms of the county surveyed consisted of between twenty and fifty acres.

Moreover, only about one-fifth of the land in farms was under cultivation; and this was also the average proportion in the six rural counties. In the upper part of the main river valley, as has been said, considerable clearing was done in early days. Only here and in the nearer end of one or two of the side valleys, are there farms upon which families live through farming alone, without other occupation.

The work of clearing the land is very difficult. The stumps and roots are much larger than in the Great Lakes region, and obstinate young growth comes in very rapidly. To prepare an average acre for the plough requires:¹⁶

About fifty days of eight hours of man labor.

Thirty-four days of horse labor.

Two hundred and five pounds of explosive, costing \$36.49 in 1921, with caps and fuse costing \$4.26.

And after so much labor and expense, the land does not bring what it cost to clear it, if the value of human labor is counted in. The average price per acre in our county in 1925 was \$67.56, and in five of the rural counties it ranged from forty-two dollars to sixty dollars. Though these values are much higher than those prevailing in the Cut-over districts of lower Michigan, they plainly do not repay the labor and expense involved.

Therefore clearing this land is good business only when it is done in spare time. To obtain a home and get ahead a little, many a man who earns his living by working in the woods or factories, buys a bit of stump land, often miles away from the scene of his work, lives on it with his family in a rough shack, and clears it nights and Sundays and during the semi-annual fortnight's vacations at Christmas and Fourth of July. Such men have to get up early enough in the morning to drive to work in their cars and arrive by eight o'clock.

The products raised under such circumstances are chiefly milk, eggs, berries and honey, which can be produced on very little land. Much of the work involved is done nights and mornings and the rest in spare time or by the wife and children. The bees

¹⁶ *Bulletin 1236, United States Department of Agriculture*, p. 4.

find their honey in wild growths among the stumps. For the milk and eggs the villages and cities in the county offer an accessible market. Throughout a large part of western Washington the markets of the cities are easily reached by way of Puget Sound, the inlets of which thread their way far into the land.

The average annual income per farm from farm sales for the county surveyed was \$1,126; and for five of the twelve rural counties it was less than \$1,000. Clearly the farm families are distinctly poor and hard-working.

OTHER RESOURCES

Fish, including salmon, are caught, partly by the prosperous Indians of a reservation, and are shipped in bulk or canned. Clams are dug for about three months in summer all along the ocean shore by several thousands of migrants; and large quantities of canned clams are produced. There is also a small whaling station.

The little centers along the ocean had summer cottages belonging to non-residents. Because of the long stretches of shore beside the harbor and the open sea, with the fishing and other attractions, local business men expected the resort situation, now in its infancy, to have a great development. Sight-seeing motorists tour through the region, and more are expected after the completion of a proposed new highway.

In spite of the resources of the county, a large majority of the people, and practically all those living outside the larger centers, are hard pressed to make a bare living.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE PEOPLE

Seven-eighths of the population of over 62,000 live in the valleys: in two small cities, which subsist on lumber industries and shipping interests; in the county-seat town, largely an agricultural center; in three villages, including a mill town, an agricultural village and a laborers' suburb of the cities; in some dozen hamlets, partly mill villages, partly agricultural distribution points; in a residence district between the county-seat and the cities; and finally, in the better-developed farm districts. This comparatively well-settled part of the country occupies considerably less than half its extent.

The rest of the county, which is larger than the state of Connecticut, has about 6,900 inhabitants. The settlements are few and far apart. The majority of the people live at mill villages, shore hamlets and bases of lumber camps. The mill villages, set

among stumps, often blackened but sometimes interspersed with feathery green growths, consist of uniform cabins, usually unpainted, for men with families, boarding-houses for single men, and one or two screeching sawmills each. Disorder, dirt and poverty are in evidence. Some of the villages have here and there an attempt at a tiny flower garden; others have nothing between the unlovely houses except mud, sawdust and tin cans.

Of bases for logging operations there are two types. In one kind the men, without families, live in bunkhouses on wheels, from which they are carried daily by train to the scene of their labors. In the other type of camp, cabins for laborers' families are grouped about a company store. Both kinds of camps are moved as the scene of logging work shifts from place to place.

The centers along the ocean contain besides summer cottages and shacks for migrants, the homes of many laborers. One of the larger mill villages is on the shore.

Thinly Settled Districts

Parts of the county are very thinly settled. In 1929, nearly one-third of the area had only from six to eighteen inhabitants per square mile; and in such districts lived over 6,650 persons. Moreover, about five-eighths of the county had fewer than six persons to the square mile; and the population of these very sparsely settled districts was over 2,150.

BARRIERS

Distance acted as a barrier in separating the people; but not roads, for the roads were good. As almost all the people not in lumber camps lived in the valleys, few roads were required. In a region having so much rain, anything less than well-graveled roads would be useless for automobile travel. Taxable resources were abundant, and state and federal aid was available toward highway construction. A paved road from Olympia entered the valley and passed along it to the cities; and all the other roads were well graveled.

Racial Barriers

About two persons out of five were either foreign-born or the children of immigrant parents. The Census of 1920 listed twenty countries of origin. In 1929 there were considerable groups representing two races not mentioned by the 1920 Census, Filipinos and Japanese. Many of the racial groups were sharply segregated, both from native Americans and from other immigrant elements, by strong racial traits, peculiar faiths, recency of

arrival and ignorance of English. Though some of the most sharply differentiated groups were confined to the larger centers, the country districts contained representatives of many foreign races both of the older and the newer immigrations. Those of foreign stock in the rural Cut-over counties of Washington ranged from 27 to 56 per cent. of the population in 1920; and as listed by the Census they represented from seventeen to twenty origins.

RECENCY OF DEVELOPMENT

The raw newness of the country districts is evident in the omnipresent stumps, the make-shift cabins, the absence of any public buildings except schoolhouses, and the bleak ugliness and untidiness of everything. Moreover, provisions essential to health have not yet been made. A typhoid epidemic, ascribed to poor sanitation and shallow water-supply, was raging at the time of the survey in a small settlement between the stump lands and the ocean. Ten of the hundred inhabitants had been taken away to a city hospital and others were ill at home. Within a year, too, there had been an epidemic of smallpox, brought by the migrants, in the settlements all along the coast.

Furthermore, to an even greater extent than in the other kinds of Cut-over territory, there was a lack in the country districts of any social ties among the people. Most of them were newcomers. The population was shifting. For the woods workers, the scene of their labors was frequently changed; and in the mills, the labor turnover was unusually high. The people represented many different races. The struggle for existence, especially for those who worked at one trade for wages and at another for a home, took so much time and strength that there was no chance for getting acquainted with neighbors, who in many cases, indeed, lived some distance away. For all these reasons the medium of mutual acquaintance, in which institutions readily develop, had hardly begun to exist. Social organizations, even in the larger mill villages, were confined to a small bridge or sewing club. Only one was discovered that performed any kind of general service; and that merely provided Christmas presents for the children of the community.

THE CHURCH SITUATION

As in the other two Cut-over areas, the activities of the churches enlisted very small proportions of the population. The people of the county surveyed were eight times as numerous as the church-members, and twelve times as numerous as the aver-

age number attending all services of worship combined. The school population, too, was three times as great as the number of children and young people, including those too young to go to public school.

In the low enlistment of the people by churches the county intensively studied was not exceptional in its area. One of the adjoining counties had less than a seventh of the people in the churches; another, only a fourteenth. The six rural Cut-over counties in western Washington had proportions of church-members ranging from a fourteenth to little more than a sixth.

Distribution of Churches

Almost all of the seventy-eight churches of the county were situated in the river valley. Forty-six were in the two cities, eleven were in the county-seat town, eleven more in three larger villages, six in four small villages and hamlets, and one, a small eastern Catholic church, in the near end of one of the tributary valleys.

These churches of the valley had enlisted only about one in seven of the dwellers in cities and town, only one in ten of the villagers, and only one in fourteen of the inhabitants of rural districts. Even in the district where the churches were, then, the proportions of people enlisted were low, especially in the country.

Districts with Lowest Proportions of Church-members

The outlying districts, with their more than 5,900 inhabitants in fifteen villages and hamlets, in logging camps and on scattered farms, had only three churches, and these were for Indians on the two Indian reservations. And to attend the churches in the larger centers would have been, for most of the people, like driving to Providence to church from remote corners of Rhode Island.

The section to the north of the valley, which consisted of fourteen townships, a forest reserve, and an Indian reservation, contained ten widely separated villages and hamlets, including mill villages, shore villages and the hamlets of farmers and laborers, with a number of camps and camp bases. It had a population of over 5,000. Less than one-twelfth of the families had any contacts with the churches in the centers; and only about one person in twenty of the people was a member of any of those churches.

A smaller section southwest of the valley, covering seven townships, had about 1,820 inhabitants. This district had for-

merly had a railroad, factories in the coast villages and at least four churches. After the removal of the railroad the population declined, and all the churches were abandoned. The degree of enlistment here was even lower than in the northern section, where there had never been any churches. Only about one family in fifty-five had any contact with a church, and only one person in 250 was a member of a church.

Four of the churchless centers in these two districts were villages of from 300 to 500 inhabitants, and nine were hamlets of more than a hundred people.

These areas were not quite without religious opportunities. Two lumber-camp missionaries, one Presbyterian and one Methodist, preached at the camps on week days, once in six weeks or so, dividing the area between them. Two Sunday-school missionaries, one Presbyterian and one American Sunday School Union, tried to start and keep alive little union Sunday schools. These four missionaries, and in particular one of them, held preaching services in schools, once a month or less often, at twelve mill villages, hamlets and other points.

The audiences at the preaching services were very small. They averaged in most cases from four to eight persons; and the largest average at any point was fifteen. The total average attendance at these services exclusive of those at camps was only about 100, or approximately 1 per cent. of the population in these districts. Those present, moreover, were for the most part the same people every time. Nearly 99 per cent. of the population hardly ever attended a service of worship.

Besides these tiny gatherings for worship and preaching, the only regular religious exercises were union Sunday schools. Of these there were eleven. They were very small, the average enrollment being only thirty-four, and were almost invariably made up of children and their teachers, without adult classes. As capable leaders were almost never to be found, the Sunday-school missionaries persuaded modest but conscientious persons, usually women, to do the best they could. These leaders used the methods in vogue during their own childhood. The schools rarely lasted long. One or two were on the point of closing at the time of the survey; and several communities that then had no Sunday school had had one at some time or other.

The Sunday schools reached only a small proportion of the country children. The sixteen school districts included in the outlying territory had a total school population of 2,043. The number of children in the Sunday schools was less than 360, or one-sixth as many. Moreover, all the Sunday schools were in

eight of the school districts; and in the other eight were 903 children of school age who had no Sunday school within reach.

An extended section with no Sunday school at all lay partly in the county studied and partly in one of those adjoining, and contained half a dozen scattered neighborhoods, with logging camps and isolated farms. It had a consolidated school of 142 pupils and two smaller schools. "The children cannot get to any Sunday school," said the logging-camp missionary who reported the facts, "unless their parents drive them eighteen miles; and they are not going to do this."

Only five centers had both Sunday school and preaching at the time of the survey, and three centers had neither one nor the other.

Alleged Reasons for Indifference to Religious Activities

Plainly the people did not care about religious observances, at least for the kinds that were offered them. For this fact the religious workers of the area offered various explanations.

Of these explanations the commonest, perhaps, was the character of the people, especially of those employed in the woods. Their work required muscle and endurance rather than the finer qualities of mind and spirit. Moreover, part of their inheritance from the rougher days of the lumber camps was a habit of scoffing at attendance at religious services. The persecution of a newly married man by his mates, because his bride had taken him to Sunday school, illustrated their characteristic attitude. They were the harder to reach because they moved about a good deal, as the scene of work changed, or as the men dropped one job for another.

A second explanation was the hard work done by the men week days and often Sundays as well, and their consequent fatigue. Those in the woods and factories had to do much repair work on Sunday. The men with places of their own often spent Sunday working upon them. All were tired, especially those undertaking double labor.

A third explanation called attention to the desire for recreation, the opportunities for pleasure offered by the roads, woods, cities and shore, and the longing to escape from drab surroundings and the reminders of daily toil.

Attention was also called to the fact that the people did not have the habit of churchgoing, and that this was difficult to establish when services came only once a month, and when Sunday schools were disbanded in summer because parents took children away on trips.

Blame was laid by some on denominational policies. Small places and thinly peopled countrysides, it was said, were neglected for villages, in the interest of statistics. It was also suggested that home-mission grants were unwisely distributed.

Workers in the little Sunday schools sometimes blamed the people of their neighborhood for wilful lack of interest in religious things. This point of view was strongly expressed by one of the ministers, who spoke of "the plain ordinary tendency of our humanity not to appreciate the best things there are."

Several other informants, on the other hand, declared that religious interest was present, but that people were not attracted by the services provided for them. Blame was ascribed to the preachers, and to the bleak, uninteresting nature of the proceedings.

Neglected Classes of People

Some of the racial groups had little or no religious ministry. Among these were the Japanese. Others, naturally Catholic, got little from the Catholic churches because of their ignorance of English. Such were Filipinos, Croatians and Dalmatians. Many Finns, as in the Great Lakes Region, were atheistical in tendency. To the migrant clam workers of many races, there was offered no service of any kind. Most of the mill workers, even of those living where there was a Sunday school or preaching service, had no contact with it. And there were no services other than those mentioned within reach of the colonies of summer residents.

Measures to Improve the Religious Situation

Among measures to afford religious ministry to the poorly enlisted districts, attention has already been given to the logging-camp and the Sunday-school missionaries, and the little Sunday schools and preaching services. Three other measures need special attention.

The first to be considered is home-mission aid, once mentioned. The aid granted to churches in the county—as distinct from salaries of logging-camp, Sunday-school and Indian settlement missionaries—consisted of \$4,670, which was given to nine churches in the four largest centers and one church in a smaller place; and in addition a few hundred dollars for work for racial city groups and for country districts, to be done by the pastor and assistant of one of the large city churches. Almost all the money, it is clear, was given to churches in communities where there were other churches, and where the proportions of church-

members, though low compared with national averages, were the highest in the county.

The work for the country of the city church receiving money for that object, was largely prospective. There was talk of radio services and larger parish, but nothing of either sort was in operation. Members of this church gave some supervision to two country Sunday schools not far from the city, but in neither case had they taken the sole responsibility for starting or conducting the school. On the whole, the city churches showed little evidence of interest in the country districts, or of a sense of responsibility for their religious welfare.

Another attempt to do missionary work was being made by an unchartered evangelist of a small denomination. In a region where there were many communities without religious privileges, he was working in a village that had a Protestant church, from the Sunday school and young people's societies of which he had drawn away many children.

TRENDS

What will be the future of the three sections described in this chapter, from which the virgin forests have been cut away?

Cut-over territory is likely to be in existence for a long time. While an area of virgin forest more than twice the size of New Jersey is being cut each year,¹⁷ area cleared for agriculture is only as large as Delaware. No two of the sections considered, however, seem likely to follow the same line of development. For the more fertile of the Cut-over sections near the Great Lakes, where the most clearing is being done, the future seems to hold an advance in agricultural prosperity; but progress will probably be slow. For lower Michigan, where on the whole population is not increasing and agriculture is not advancing, there is predicted a limited development based chiefly on state and national forests and on service to vacationists, supplemented by a little agriculture. For western Washington, the clearing of logged-off land is expected to be very slow and in small patches; and a decline of prosperity seems inevitable when the extensive lumbering operations come to an end. In all three regions, therefore, the churches will probably confront for a long time conditions not very different from those here described.

SUMMARY

In two Cut-over sections about the Great Lakes and in one in the Pacific Northwest, which together occupy an area of over

¹⁷ Data from L. C. Gray, "Utilization of Our Lands for Crops, Pasture and Forest," *Yearbook of Agriculture*, 1923, p. 451.

120,000 square miles, more than 1,165,000 rural inhabitants are engaged in a hard struggle to clear pieces of land of stumps and brush, to make a bare livelihood, and to develop the institutions and facilities of civilization.

All these sections have extensive districts where the inhabitants are very thinly scattered. In lower Michigan these areas correspond, in part, with sections having sterile soil. In the Minnesota county surveyed, which is without large barren tracts, development has begun at points widely scattered over the whole area. And in a single county in western Washington, where extensive logging operations are still going on, an area as large as Rhode Island contains 6,900 people distributed in a few mill villages, shore settlements and lumber camps, and on small farms in the valleys; most of the territory being in stumps and young growth.

The people of these Cut-over sections are divided by distance, by uninhabited districts, and in the regions near the Great Lakes by poor roads; and they are also divided by racial barriers that not only separate the native Americans from the foreign-born, but the widely diverse strains of immigrants from one another.

Again, owing to their poverty, their recent arrival, and the thin and divided population, the people of these areas have not advanced far in the development of their institutions, especially in the rural districts.

As for the churches, very small proportions of the population belong to them or attend their services. These churches are few and small, their fields are limited by racial and geographical lines, and their activities have no appeal for the great majority of the people. In the Washington county there are almost no churches outside the principal valley.

The missionary work of various kinds that is being conducted in the Washington county, whatever else it may have accomplished, has not resulted in the enlistment of country people.

The lack of concerted action and comprehensive policies on the part of the many different denominations working in the Cut-over sections, has proved to be ill adapted to territory so poor, so new, and so scantily provided with church-minded people. In the Great Lakes sections, moreover, the churches meet comparison with secular agencies whose activities are comprehensive and unified, involve large expenditures, and issue in manifest results.

Chapter VII

DRY-FARMING REGIONS

The Dry-farming areas of the United States are developing more rapidly, and began their development more recently, than any of the other areas covered by the present study. But the church is making little headway in these newest of frontier lands.



DIAGRAM XXIII

Impressionistic Map of three Dry-farming regions in the United States

LOCATION

Dry-farming is predominant over 111 whole counties, almost all of which are situated either in the western part of the Spring Wheat Belt, in northern and northeastern Montana, middle and western North Dakota, and north-central South Dakota; or in the western part of the Winter Wheat Belt, in eastern Colorado, southwestern Nebraska, western Kansas, the panhandle of Oklahoma, and the northwestern corner of Texas; or in the Columbia Basin, where dry-farming is practiced in the middle and south-eastern parts of eastern Washington and adjoining parts of Oregon and Idaho. The location of these three Dry-farming regions is shown in Diagram XXIII.

The first and second of them form parts of the Great Plains, and lie between the moister easterly strip where dry-farming methods are not necessary, and the arid Grazing regions to the west. The semi-arid parts of the Spring and Winter Wheat regions are separated by parts of South Dakota and Nebraska containing bad lands or sand hills, where grazing is either combined with dry-farming or forms the predominant type of agriculture.

EXTENT

These Dry-farming counties have a combined area of nearly 168,000 square miles, thus being as large as New England and the Middle Atlantic states taken together. Though only one-third as extensive as the vast Grazing country, the Dry-farming regions cover practically as much area as the Mountain sections and more than the Cut-over districts.

About four-ninths of this Dry-farming territory is in the Spring Wheat Belt; about a third of it in the Winter Wheat Belt; and two-ninths in the Columbia Basin.

RURAL POPULATION

The Dry-farming regions contained in 1920 over 807,000 rural inhabitants, nearly a quarter of the total number found in the new territory of all four types. The rural population of the Dry-farming country, indeed, was three-tenths larger than that of the Grazing regions in spite of the much greater extent of the latter, and was nine-tenths greater than that of the Mountain sections.

THE DRY-FARMING REGIONS OF THE GREAT PLAINS

TOPOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

The first thing that is noticed by the visitor to the Dry-farming country of the Great Plains is the extreme flatness of the wheat lands. In winter or spring the green of young wheat stretches away as flat as a floor for mile after mile. The fields are so large that the widely separated wire fences are not noticeable. Windmills a mile or more apart dot the unbroken plain, no more than three to five being visible from one point of view. As the traveler approaches, he sees near the foot of the windmill a few trees, sometimes disposed to form a windbreak, sometimes around the cluster of small buildings. These buildings were originally dugouts, or "soddies"; but by 1929, when the field surveys were made, the farmers in the counties visited, one of

which was in Montana, the other in New Mexico, had erected small houses and farm buildings of wood or concrete.

The parts of the area that are not under cultivation, either because they are rougher, drier or more distant from the railway, or simply because they have not as yet been put under the plow, are covered with bunch-grass and "beargrass"—which in eastern gardens is called yucca—and are used for grazing.

One of the counties visited in this study is crossed by a river. This has cut its bed down considerably below the general level. Rain and atmospheric forces have gradually eroded the edges of the depression into benches and mesas, picturesque in outline. These "bad lands," as they are called, are used only for grazing.

The other county has not a single stream that flows throughout the year. Grassy "draws," or irregular, wide trenches, show where the spring freshets make their way. These draws are not cultivated. The two conditions—rare streams accompanied by bad lands, and draws with no permanent watercourses—are both characteristic of the Dry lands. Both are mere interruptions in the general flatness. Neither is under cultivation.

Level as the country appears to the eye, the Dry lands of the Spring and Winter Wheat regions, forming part of the Great Plains, are really slightly inclined from west to east. That results in considerable range of altitude. Most of the counties, however, lie at altitudes of between 2,000 and 5,000 feet. None falls below 1,500 feet; and though a few have districts above 5,000 feet, little dry-farming is done at such elevations. The generally high altitude results in hot summers and cold winters.

It goes without saying that the climate is dry. The minimum annual precipitation for dry-farming in the Great Plains ranges from about twenty inches in the hot southern part of the Winter Wheat region with its rapid evaporation, to thirteen or fourteen inches in the north. In most of the Dry-farming counties the average annual precipitation ranges between fourteen and eighteen inches. Such rain as there is comes largely when it is needed for the growing crops, over 70 per cent. falling in spring and summer.

Some of it, however, does the crops no good, either because it falls in amounts too small to penetrate the soil before being evaporated, or because it comes when the ground is frozen or parched.

The rainfall is not only slight but very irregular. Serious droughts are frequent, and sometimes come several years in succession.

The hazards of farming are increased by occasional hail-

storms, which form so serious a danger that farmers take out insurance against them; by killing frosts late in the spring; and by hot winds, which sometimes blow for days together and cook the ripening grain.

HISTORY

Because of their peculiarities of climate, it is no wonder that these lands were not permanently settled until late. At first they were Grazing country where cattle and cowboys roamed the open range. Unsuccessful attempts to homestead them were made early. Eastern Kansas and Nebraska had been successfully homesteaded. No one knew about the "semi-arid line," or realized the hazards of farming farther west; and settlers kept on moving westward.

They tried to farm the Dry lands by the methods they had used farther east. Perhaps a few good seasons and bumper crops brought their old neighbors after them; and counties were organized. But the homestead of 160 acres granted by Lincoln's administration was not big enough to support a family in the dry country, where crops are light in the most favorable seasons and considerable pasture is required for cattle.

And there came drought, hail, frost and grasshoppers; and then perhaps, another year of drought, and after that still another. The homesteaders had to go away or starve. In western Kansas nine counties lost their identity and were annexed to adjoining counties between 1875 and 1885. Fully as many counties, once recorded by the Census, were dropped later both in Nebraska and in North Dakota.

Later on a second tide of settlers flowed in upon the Dry lands. Three of the abandoned Kansas counties were reorganized only three years after they had lost their original identity. Many localities were settled three times. Each migration contributed to the final conquest by clearing the soil, building homes and schoolhouses, and breaking out roads. The people who came last knew more about the country and how to farm under its peculiar conditions. By 1890 settlement was well under way in the dry parts of the Winter Wheat Belt and in a few counties of the Dakotas.

Vicissitudes still followed the settlers, and many failed. The population of the Dry-farming counties of the Winter Wheat Belt declined by one-third between 1890 and 1900. But free land in more favorable situations had grown scarce, and popular interest in methods of farming peculiarly appropriate to the Dry lands became widespread.

Mr. H. W. Campbell and Dr. V. T. Cook made their experiments and spread the knowledge of their discoveries. Not only did population increase again where it had declined, but the larger part of the Spring Wheat Belt was developed at this time, and Dry-farming was introduced into eastern New Mexico. In each new district conquest was at the expense of failures. The incompetent, the ignorant and unadaptable, and those without capital, were eliminated by a few years of drought. The farmers that remained enlarged their holdings by buying at low rates the land of those who went away. In 1909 the size of homesteads was raised by Congress from a fourth of a square mile to a half, and in 1916 to a whole square mile or section.

The vicissitudes of the Dry lands found political expression first in the Greenback movement, later in Populism, and much later still in the Non-partizan League.

The growth of the Dry-farming regions was stimulated by the demand for wheat during the World War. Not only did acreage in wheat increase 62 per cent. in the dry part of the Spring Wheat Belt and 175 per cent. in the dry part of the Winter Wheat Belt, between 1909 and 1918; but the number of farms made some gain. Between 1910 and 1920 the population increased by one-fifth in the Spring Wheat counties and by three-eighths in the Winter Wheat counties.

Even when the exceptional war demand was over and other wheat-producing counties reëntered the world market, the acreage in wheat continued to grow in both these regions, increasing one-fourth between the agricultural censuses of 1919 and 1924. As the number of farms more than held its own for those five years in the former region and increased by one-tenth in the latter, the population also probably increased up to 1925; and no signs of a decrease since that date were observed during the field trip.

The probable gain in population was made in spite of a very rapid increase in the use of farm machinery, which made it not only possible for a farmer to handle more acres but imperative that he should do so in order to meet the increased expense. But as the land added to dry farms was taken to some extent from the large stock ranches, the average size of what the Census calls a farm, which includes both ranches and farms, after rising from 1900 to 1920, somewhat decreased in both areas between 1920 and 1925.

The continued development, moreover, took place in spite of very serious drought during the years 1917 to 1920. This, as in the past, brought disaster to many farmers. But for those

who withstood the drought several years of prosperity followed. In 1929 and 1930, however, though harvests were still large, the price of wheat was very low. In 1929 the surplus was bought by the Farm Board.

AGRICULTURE

Obstacles

The farmers of the Dry lands, as we have seen, encounter many peculiar obstacles. They have to contend, first, with those serious climatological drawbacks already mentioned—drought, hail, frost and hot winds—and also with rust and grasshoppers. If notwithstanding all these dangers they obtain a good crop, they sometimes receive a very low price for it, because of large supplies from other wheat countries.

And besides, since they raise only two or three crops and buy almost everything they require, they are at the mercy of the railroads, the markets and the bankers. Low prices and high freight rates are particularly serious in these young lands, because people have not had time to accumulate reserves.

Advantages

Along with all these drawbacks, however, the Dry lands have certain notable advantages. In the first place, the land is level, so that it can be worked by machinery, through the use of which one farmer can handle a large farm. The land is also very easily cleared. Again, the dryness that in some ways forms so serious a danger, is in other respects an advantage. It permits the farmers of the Southwest to use the combine to harvest the grain, thresh it and load the product on trucks all in a single operation in the field, thus diminishing the cost of harvesting the wheat, it is estimated, by twenty cents a bushel.¹ The dryness also makes it possible to let some of the wheat stand; so that two men with machinery can do over several weeks what in the land of frequent thunder showers must be done within a few days with the help of migrant labor.

A third peculiar advantage of the semi-arid regions is an unusually fertile soil. The soil contains as much humus as the average soil, and the humus has a higher proportion of nitrogen. It also contains more lime, which not only prevents it from being acid but gives it a better physical condition. Since the particles of soil were not deposited by water, the soil is not

¹ *Recent Economic Changes in the United States* (New York; McGraw-Hill, 1929), Vol. II, pp. 561 ff.

stratified but is often uniform to a great depth; and fine clay is not abundant.²

Adjustments

To utilize these unusual advantages while minimizing his peculiar drawbacks, is the problem of the Dry-land farmer. To help him solve it he has the lessons taught by the disastrous experience of his predecessors, and to some extent those learned from his own mistakes. Besides, in this new land it is easy to throw overboard old habits and prejudices. He also has the help of government agencies. Agricultural experiment stations have developed strains of wheat adapted both to endure drought through roots going down sometimes six feet into the soil, and also wheat with straw stiff enough to resist wind and to stand in the field awaiting the farmer's convenience. These experiment stations have also tried out various methods of culture and have broadcast their conclusions to the farmers.

With this assistance the "dry-lander," as he is often called locally, has learned to choose the most favorable location for his fields, and the best-adapted crops and strains. He has come as well to use such methods as summer-fallow, soil-packing, and irrigation with the stored water of spring-freshets.

He has also enlarged the size of his farm. From the 160 acres of the original homestead grant, the size gradually increased till in 1925 the average size of farms in semi-arid Spring Wheat counties was 500 acres, and in the semi-arid Winter Wheat counties was 660 acres. In both regions four-fifths of the farms contained over 260 acres, and three-eighths of the farms in the former region and two-fifths of those in the latter comprised 500 acres or more.

More important still, the farmer has come to use a great deal of farm machinery. The number of farm tractors, for instance, was in 1925 a fifth as large as the number of farms in the Spring Wheat counties, while for the United States as a whole it was only one-thirteenth as large. Moreover, the number is rapidly increasing. In one of the counties visited in 1929, according to the estimate of the county agent, nearly four times as many tractors had been bought since 1925 as had been owned that year in the whole country. The number of combines, too, was growing fast.

Some of the farmers in the Spring Wheat area, where hot, dry weather at harvest time could not always be counted upon,

² Data regarding soil from Bowman, *Forest Physiography* (New York; John Wiley and Sons, 1911), p. 95.

utilized a form of combine fitted with a device to spread the grain in swathes for drying and another device to gather it up again for threshing. The number of combines sold in the United States in 1927 was 11,221, more than three times as many as in 1925;³ and a large proportion of these combines went to the drier regions.

Economic Status

The farmers have not achieved a stable prosperity; the day is too early for that. Many farms carry a mortgage, dating either from the time of purchase or from some year of drought or other disaster. In both regions five-eighths of the farms operated by owners were mortgaged in 1925. If the situation in the Montana county surveyed was typical, the amounts owned were diminished in the fall of 1925 and 1927, both of which years in that county brought the farmers good harvests and high prices. But low prices for wheat since the latter year had tended to limit further reductions of debts.

The farmers, moreover, are still in the stage of providing their farms and homes with equipment. They would not live in the precarious conditions of the Dry lands if they were not sanguine folk, ready to take chances. When after several years of crop failure they had a few remunerative harvests, they not only improved their homes but also started buying what they wanted on the instalment plan. They acquired in this way, besides the farm machinery already mentioned, such things as new automobiles, radio outfits and washing machines. After two years of low prices of wheat, they must have been in serious straits in 1930, especially since their bank reserves were low and since in the time of drought they had sacrificed many of their cattle, on which they could have borrowed money, and the bankers were unwilling to take machinery as security.⁴

In spite of temporary embarrassment resulting from large capital expenditures and low prices for wheat, the Dry lands are basically prosperous. The average price of farm land in 1925 was \$16.30 per acre for the dry part of the Spring Wheat region and \$18.84 per acre for the dry Winter Wheat counties. The average farm income per farm was \$2,858. The fifth of the farmers who operated farms of less than 260 acres, of course, had a far lower income. The income from farm sales per acre

³ *Recent Economic Changes in the United States*, Volume II, p. 563.

⁴ Facts in the two preceding paragraphs relate specifically to the Montana county surveyed; but there are reasons to believe the conditions to be general.

was \$5. From the point of view of church budgets the fact of immediate significance is that neither the large-scale nor the small-scale farmers had much surplus from which to make contributions.

The Farmers

The farmers who have survived the vicissitudes of the Dry lands in recent years are a picked body of men. Those who did not fail and go away have proved themselves to have good judgment, self-possession in emergencies, adaptability, and endurance both of physique and of character. Moreover, they have grown accustomed to large affairs and have learned to insist upon efficiency.

PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

The Dry-farming people are struggling, not only for domestic security and equipment, but for the utilities and institutions required by civilized communities. They are building roads: in one year the New Mexico county visited had graded three hundred miles of road, along which had been placed culverts where they were needed. The same county had been at work consolidating its country schools ever since its organization fifteen years before. By 1929 many of the school buildings were two-story modern structures of four or more rooms; and some of the schools, standing in almost empty prairie, had been accredited by the state. In many counties public buildings are being erected. The same ambition to acquire the institutions of civilization shows itself in some villages in an unceiled little cabin to house the beginnings of a public library, and in other places in simple community halls.

DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

Like the three other kinds of new territory already described the Dry-farming country has few inhabitants in proportion to its extent.

Low Density

In 1926 the general density was 4.8 for the Spring Wheat counties and 4.6 for the Winter Wheat Country. This means about one family per square mile, centers and open country both considered. In the states crossed by the semi-arid line, the population of the Dry-farming counties was much more sparse than that of the moister portions of the same states. In Kansas, for example, in 1920, there were 170 acres per inhabitant west of

the semi-arid line, but only twenty-five acres per inhabitant east of it.

This sparsity of population, moreover, is not a mere matter of averages, but is generally characteristic of the two regions. Not one of the sixty-nine sample counties of the two regions had in 1920 more than nine persons to the square mile, and forty counties had fewer than six persons.

Open Country

The large size of most of the farms keeps the homes apart; and the fact that in one region three-fifths and in the other more than two-thirds of the area was in farms in 1925 certifies to the wide distribution of the people. On an average the Dry Lands of the Great Plains had about five farms in seven square miles. If the farm houses had been evenly distributed they would have been a mile and one-fifth apart. The density outside incorporated centers was 3.4 persons per square mile. Within ten miles of a given point, on an average, there were 225 farms and 1,068 inhabitants. These figures are only averages, for that land is naturally more thickly settled which is more fertile and level, less arid, and more accessible to villages and railway shipping points.

Though average Dry-farming territory is sparsely settled, it is more thickly populated than the Grazing country, having in an equivalent open-country area five times as many farms and between four and five times as many inhabitants. The average number of persons within ten miles of a given point, 1,068, is far better adapted to sustain community activities than the 239 of the Grazing country.

Centers

The centers of the Dry lands are few and small, and are chiefly service points for the farmers and for the railroads. The two regions now under consideration had in 1920, including county-seats and such other places as were incorporated, 205 centers. The average distance apart of these centers was twenty-two miles; but, like the centers of the Grazing country, they were so grouped that much of the area was a long way from any center. Their average population was 507; but 129 of them, considerably more than half, had fewer than 500 inhabitants. Even the county-seats were small. Twenty-nine of the eighty-one county seats had 1,000 inhabitants or more each; and only two had more than 1,750. Twenty-four had populations of fewer than 500.

In comparison with the centers of the Grazing country the centers of the Dry lands in the Great Plains were only about half as far apart. Their population was smaller, the average being little over 500 while that of the Grazing country was nearly 800, yet they had a community of interest with the farm population that was lacking in the Grazing country. Adding an average village population of 507 to an average open-country population within ten miles of 1,068, we get 1,575 persons, enough for effective action if united in common enterprises.

BARRIERS

Though topographical barriers are almost non-existent in the Dry lands, several conditions prevent easy passage and communication both between these regions and the outside world, and within them, from farms to center and from one district to another.

Inadequate Railway Service

To begin with, the railroads are far apart. In 1929 few counties were crossed by more than one, eight were served only by branch lines, and seven had no rail connections whatever.

Poor Roads

In the next place, most of the roads are still poor; and the families are so widely scattered that what good roads there are can be used by only a small proportion of the people. In 1925 only one farm in twenty-six was on a surfaced road in the Winter Wheat counties, and in the Spring Wheat counties only one in a hundred. On the other hand, more than half the farms in both regions were on unimproved dirt roads. And many of the roads are of that peculiarly obnoxious clay called *gumbo*. After the rains, which though rare do occur and sometimes come in torrents, the roads are practically impassable for cars for several days. At such times local daily papers publish bulletins, not on "Weather" alone, but on "Weather and Roads." These describe the condition of the various roads as "soft in places but passable," or "very rough near Dry Creek." In the northern states deep snows cover many of the side roads for months, so that traffic is difficult, and few people get out except mail carriers and schoolbus drivers, who are paid for it.

Here, too, as in the Grazing country, communication by the telephone is not the matter of course it has become in more thickly settled rural districts. As a rule lines serve only the farms on routes between centers.

Radio outfits are increasing in number. Though in general only one in twenty farms had a radio outfit in 1925, in the counties surveyed many farm families had acquired them between 1925 and 1929.

Hinterland

Because of the sparsity of population, the distance of much Dry-farming territory from any center, and the poor roads and other hindrances to travel and communication, the Dry Lands contain large stretches of hinterland. The isolation of the inhabitants of this hinterland is only less extreme than in the similar area of the Grazing country.

Racial Groups

In regard to the intangible barriers of race, the two regions show a distinct difference. In the Winter Wheat counties only 5.4 per cent. of the people were foreign-born in 1920. Few counties had many immigrants from the same foreign country; and such groups as did exist were almost invariably from Germany or Sweden, and therefore comparatively assimilable.

In the Spring Wheat region, on the other hand, there was in 1920 between three and four times as high a proportion of immigrants, the percentage being 19.4 per cent. Fifteen of the thirty-seven counties in the sample for this region had percentages of 20 per cent. or over, twelve of the counties being in North Dakota.

The largest and most numerous groups came from Russia. In the Montana county visited, as in some others, these immigrants from Russia were of German stock. Norwegians were next in strength of representation, and they were followed by groups from other Scandinavian countries, from Germany and from Canada, the great majority of the immigrants thus being of the older immigration. There were also, however, groups from Rumania and other countries.

Northerners and Southerners

In some dry counties of the Winter Wheat region American settlers have come partly from the North and partly from the South. This causes a division in religious matters, since the Northerners adhere to one set of denominations and the Southerners to another.

Poor Social Integration

Like the other kinds of new territory studied, the Dry lands have not yet achieved any great degree of social integration. Here, as elsewhere, social development has been delayed by the

sparseness of population, the poor roads, the recency of arrival of many settlers and their preoccupation with stern necessities. The virile Dry-landers, however, have already begun to develop social organizations, particularly the Grange and lodges of various kinds.

PSYCHOLOGY

Solidarity of feeling is being fostered by memories of common hardships and triumphs. Traditions of "barrels of tears" shed on the Plains, of the rabbits and beans eaten by distant farmers when they camped at feed yards on their rare trips to town for supplies, of tragic crop failures and final triumphs, serve to bind the people together in loyalty to their adopted land. This growing sense of loyalty gives assurance of a stable population. It also has a share in fostering the swift development of public improvements such as roads and schools. This general attitude is in strong contrast with the division and indifference found in the Grazing area.

The youth of the country, according to a well-informed observer, tends toward good social relations. For one thing, the people are still on much the same economic level. For another, they have not lived together so long that they have found one another out; they had not begun to "draw their skirts around them," said the same informant, "and say, 'I am holier than thou,' in the way that cuts into any community enterprise."

Another psychological trait of the Dry-landers is the desire for escape through recreation. This motive, though strong in the other three kinds of new area, is intensified in the Dry lands by several peculiar circumstances. One of these is the blank monotony of the environment, where the level wheat fields or the plains covered with bunch-grass stretch away for miles and miles, without a tree except the saplings planted near the homes.

Another factor is the uncertainty of the future. Payment on instalments and on mortgages, even food and shelter, depends on the seasonable coming of rain. And day after day often goes by without a shower. Some escape from the pressure of anxiety is essential. At the same time, the facilities for out-door recreation so abundant in the Mountains and the Cut-over country are here almost altogether lacking. The chief recreations are moving-picture shows, dances and the drinking of bootlegger liquor. Many of the farmers are so far from a moving-picture theatre as to be able to visit it only on Sunday. The dances, as in the other kinds of territory, are held regularly on Saturday nights and last till all hours of Sunday morning.

THE CHURCH SITUATION

Number of Church-members

In the recently developed Spring Wheat region, about two-fifths of the people were members of the churches; in the Winter Wheat region, only about a quarter.⁵ Among the sixty-nine counties of the two regions, fifty-five had proportions below the national average, and nineteen had proportions below 25 per cent.

A smaller proportion of counties, however, had very low proportions than in any of the other kinds of territory. Only seven of the sixty-nine counties in these two Dry-farming regions—that is one-tenth of them—had ratios falling below 15 per cent.; whereas, in the other kinds of territory combined, one-third of the counties had ratios lower than this.

In a County of New Mexico

In the Dry-farming county of New Mexico that was studied intensively, settlement had begun less than twenty-five years previous. The settlers were in great measure people from various southern states. Some of them brought with them a strong adherence to certain southern denominations and the habit of churchgoing.

The Organization of Churches

Churches were soon established in the county-seat, a railroad center that rapidly grew to the size of a town, and in the two villages. In this new country a period of church development was being experienced that in other kinds of territory had been passed through one or more generations earlier. But many of the country people lived out of reach of the churches. Gathering in the little one-room schoolhouses that had been dotted over the plain as fast as it was homesteaded, they held union Sunday schools. Later they formed little churches, which were Methodist, Baptist, or some other denomination, according to the adherence of the strongest local group. These little churches were served by non-resident ministers, who preached once or twice a month to each of four or five churches apiece. The church-minded people of whatever denomination attended the services, and continued to hold a union Sunday school.

Beginning about 1914, the ungraded schools were gradually consolidated. The vote to consolidate in any district was immediately followed by the moving of the schoolhouse to the site

⁵ See Appendix III, p. 283.

where the new building was to be erected. The Sunday schools, following the building in which they had met, automatically coalesced into larger units. When two churches were thus brought together, if of the same denomination, they were merged; if of different denominations, each kept its separate existence and held on different Sundays services that were attended by both sets of families. Moreover, where there had been a few Baptists, say, in each of several school districts, but not enough in any one district to make a church, the combined Baptists felt able to form an organization when these districts were consolidated.

By 1929, fourteen hamlet or country locations of consolidated schools had twenty-six churches, seven having two churches each, and three having three churches each. At five points, all very small, little church buildings had been erected, and three of these points had two church buildings apiece. The Sunday schools held in church buildings were not union; but at two points both a small denominational Sunday school and a larger union Sunday school were maintained.

Country Sunday Schools

In 1929, nine union and nine denominational Sunday schools were held in the little hamlets and at country schools. Taken together they had an enrollment of 1,376, of which nearly half consisted of adults.

One of the union Sunday schools was visited by the investigator. It was held in a large consolidated school building, which with its teacherage stood alone at a four-corners in the midst of the bare plains. A heavy snow had just fallen, and few roads were broken out; yet fourteen were present, of whom five were young men. The classes were combined in one, taught by the superintendent, a farmer of energy, of vigorous mind, and of a spirit at once earnest and tolerant. Instead of mechanically following the questions of the quarterly, as is so often the way in country Sunday schools, he elicited thoughtful discussion from those present. The lesson was the story of the Prodigal Son, combined with a passage in Acts. All present spoke at least once, and several joined freely in the discussion. They evidently believed literally in the words of the Bible, and were sincerely trying to get at the meaning of the passages, and to draw from them guidance for their own lives. They interpreted things in terms of their own environment. For instance, the departure of the Prodigal Son they compared to a habit they ascribed to cattle of leaving good pasture for poorer; and also

to a way horses had of grazing at the limit of their tether, even if the best grass was near the stake in the middle. And something was "as hard as raising wheat in New Mexico."

They showed themselves tolerant of one another's beliefs. For example, a reference in the text to baptism called out no reference to the form of baptism, though Baptist, Methodist and Pentecostal organizations all met at that school. And one man, a Methodist, compared the attitude of the elder brother in the parable of the lesson to not being glad when the Baptists made a convert. "If I am not glad," he added, "I ought to repent it."

To such people as these the little Sunday schools and churches evidently brought social contacts, intellectual stimulus and moral guidance. Sunday schools resembling more or less the one visited were held at all but one of the points having consolidated schools; and wherever there was a Sunday school there was at least one little church organization.

Incomplete Enlistment

But there was a less favorable side of the picture. Only three-eighths of the country families were related either to the country churches and Sunday schools or to those in the town or the villages. A large majority of the people had no contact with these religious institutions.

The number of children and young people in the Sunday schools, moreover, was equivalent to only 61 per cent. of the school population. As the Sunday school "beginners" were below school age, considerably more than 40 per cent. of the children and young people were not receiving any formal religious training. It was admittedly difficult for the country Sunday schools to hold the young people. They had been taught to sing in public school, and they did not like to hear forced voices drawling out of tune.

Declining Interest

The churches and Sunday schools, furthermore, were reported to interest fewer of the people than formerly. The preacher for one of the churches meeting at the school where the investigator went to Sunday school had also preached in the same locality seventeen years earlier. He reported that attendance was smaller than during his former period of service, and that the membership was only a quarter of what it had been in his earlier pastorate. "Some," he said, "have moved away, but more have drifted away. Since consolidation, some families have a good way to come to church."

But he did not consider this the main explanation. He went on, "When everybody was poor we could get a good crowd. Since people have had a few good crops, they feel more independent of religion. Life has become one round of labor. They harvest on Sunday."

A similar comparison and parallel explanations were given by other informants. The churches were holding only the people who had strong religious traditions, and were losing the children even of these.

Unattractive Program

As the Dry-land farmers were used to large affairs, the churches must have seemed to them very small business. The twenty-six hamlet and country churches averaged thirty-one resident members apiece, and ten of them had fewer than twenty-five members each. With two and even three churches at so many points, the scattered people who would have been able to support adequately a single church, were divided into two or more small groups. These little churches had small budgets: not only were their constituents few, but what the people had given in the days of struggle provided the standard of church life to which they were accustomed; and they had not increased their contributions. Small budgets usually meant sharing the preacher with four other churches. Resident ministers lived in but two of the country centers. Church buildings had been erected at only five centers, so that at the other points, meeting in schools, the audience had to sit at the pupils' desks. Preaching and Sunday school, with sometimes a young-people's society, practically summed up the activities of the churches. Only a third of them even had women's societies. Take it all together, what the little churches offered was attractive only to those who already had an interest in religious things; and, in the words of a country storekeeper, "fifty per cent. of the people are not interested in churches."

In a Montana County

The Montana county surveyed, which naturally belonged to the Spring Wheat region, was not quite so well enlisted by churches as the one just considered; but within the county certain country districts were not so well enlisted as others. In sixteen districts, inhabited chiefly by old Americans, only 11.5 per cent. of the people belonged to the churches; and seven of these districts had no church-members at all. On the other hand, in ten districts having a large per cent. of the population

foreign-born, the church-members formed 22.5 per cent. of the people; a proportion which, low as it was, was twice as high as in the old-American districts. The immigrants were mainly Germans—some of them Russian Germans—and Scandinavians. Their nine churches were Evangelical, Lutheran, or Congregational. The members of all the Congregational churches, of which there were four, all very small, were Germans from Russia. They had become estranged from their original faith, which was Lutheran; and in Dakota, their first American home, they had become Congregationalists. Their church evidently meant much to them, although they had only bare little church buildings. Two of the churches had non-resident ministers. The others had no minister at the time they were visited; but the members conducted services by themselves. Leaders of these racial churches complained that it was hard to get the children to church; they could not understand the long foreign words used by the speakers.

In spite of considerable segregation of racial groups, diversity of origin was resulting in competing churches. In each of two country neighborhoods, three religious groups were holding services, and a second church was about to be organized in a small hamlet.

The old Americans of the county had not brought with them any strong religious affiliations. The American Protestant churches numbered only three: one at the county-seat; a second in one of the two hamlets, and a tiny Adventist church in the country. The church at the county-seat—the only village, which had some 800 inhabitants—had under previous ministers established and supervised Sunday schools at various country points with the assistance of Sunday-school missionaries; and had also drawn a few country people, especially in one neighborhood, into its membership. Local leadership for Sunday schools was not so available as in the New Mexico county. Two or three neighborhoods without Sunday schools had sent representatives to the present minister at the county-seat to beg that he, who was popularly considered a "spell-binder," would undertake to give them Sunday schools. One man, reported to be one of the least reputable characters in the county, plead with him for two hours. "I am past it," he said; "I want it for the children." But the minister replied, "We can't cut ourselves in little pieces." This man, besides his pastoral work, was running a ranch of his own and frequently preached by request in villages outside the county. Meantime nothing was being done about the neighborhoods wanting Sunday schools.

Corroborative Evidence

Several conditions observed in the counties surveyed were shown to be common in the dry parts of the Spring and Winter Wheat regions by the testimony of other observers, most of them denominational superintendents.

Church Consciousness in Some Districts

It was observed elsewhere, first, that some young Dry-farming districts had residents that clung to religious traditions they had brought with them. Miss Helen O. Belknap, for example, writes of another Dry-farming county in New Mexico:

Union, the most recently developed county of the four, still has a marked church consciousness. The majority of the people have not yet broken with the habits and customs of the more closely settled and churched Middle West from which they came.⁶

The communities of Union County, moreover, differed in the degree of their "church consciousness." Armstad, which had been started about fourteen years before by a preacher who had advertised the locality in religious papers, and which had had thirty ministers among its settlers, was a churchgoing community. Seven other communities, on the other hand, had no churches, only Sunday schools or preaching points; and three additional communities had no religious ministry whatever.

Several denominational superintendents in Colorado and Wyoming cited a number of communities in the Dry lands of those states as having developed a satisfying church life, and as being interested in the social and cultural values of the church. In each of the six or seven cases the church described was the only one in its community. Some of these strong churches were Methodist and some were Presbyterian.

Decline in Interest

Witness was also borne to a decline in church interest in the older Dry-farming districts. A denominational superintendent in Montana said, for example:

It is much more difficult to get leaders for country Sunday schools than it was thirty years ago. Then church people from the East were scattered over the country. They were eager for church services, and ready to give themselves. Now a new generation has come up who are not ready to teach because they have not had the training their parents had. The little Sunday school was not enough.

⁶ *The Church on the Changing Frontier* (New York; Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1922), p. 57.

Indifference to Churches

All witnesses agreed, moreover, that many Dry-landers were very indifferent to the churches. Here are a few typical statements made to the investigator by denominational superintendents:

They don't go to church. But take a dance and they will pile round it for miles.

The Saturday night dance, with booze and the 3 A. M. closing, has killed more Sunday schools than anything else.

They will drive twelve or fifteen miles Sunday evening to a picture show, but not to a church service.

In many communities the Grange and the lodges supercede the church in interest to the citizens. People that belong to a lodge feel that they get more out of it than the church can offer.

Explanations

The explanations suggested for this indifference were the familiar ones, such as—

Lack of religious antecedents.

Small churches.

Inadequate financial support.

Poor ministerial service.

A program not commanding popular interest and respect.

Two quotations will sufficiently illustrate how the experts consulted think on these points:

The members are farther along in thinking than the ministers. A church of sixty people can't support a minister that can keep them on the jump. They get tired of going just because it is their duty. Consolidation ought to result in better ministry.

Two reasons: first, the leaders are not church-minded. Secondly, the church is to blame in that it does not offer an aggressive, constructive program, that challenges the interest and efforts of the people. The church just exists, that is all.

THE COLUMBIA BASIN

The other extensive Dry-farming section in the United States lies in the Columbia Basin. Here eighteen Dry-farming counties have an area and a rural population rather less than one-fourth those of the two Great Plains regions combined and one-fourth as many farms.

POINTS OF RESEMBLANCE

In many respects the Columbian Basin resembles the other two Dry-farming regions. It presents similar far-stretching

areas with widely scattered farms devoted mainly to growing wheat. The average density is practically the same. The average income from farm sales in 1921-1924 fell between those of the other two regions, and so did the percentage of foreign-born among the inhabitants in 1920. Two tendencies operating in the other regions are also present here: the growing mechanization of agriculture, and the accompanying increase in the size of farms.

POINTS OF DIFFERENCE

In certain particulars, however, the Columbia Basin differs from the Dry-farming regions of the Great Plains.

Greater Aridity

Most of it has an even lower average annual precipitation. Lying as it does between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific coast ranges, it would be too dry to grow wheat or anything else, were it not for an unusual combination of circumstances. Since the altitude is much lower than that of the Spring Wheat region, and the chinook winds raise the temperature swiftly after the winter storms, wheat can be planted in the late fall or early winter. Through the valley of the Columbia River, which forms a wide break in the western mountains, the cyclonic storms in winter suck moisture-laden winds from over the Pacific Ocean. Coming into contact with the land, which at that season is colder than the sea, these winds drop their moisture. This is held by deep soil of volcanic origin till the wheat needs it. And the crop is harvested early, before the intense heat of the dry summer. Because a large proportion of the water that falls is thus actually utilized by the wheat, crops are obtained with a lower annual precipitation than anywhere else in the United States. Much of the "Big Bend" country between the Snake River and a wide curve of the Columbia in central Washington, has a rainfall of below ten inches; but wheat is raised with even as little as eight and a half inches. Some of this country is too dry for wheat; and a lower proportion of the area is in farms than in the other two regions.

Degree of Mechanization

Because of this greater aridity, the wheat can be harvested and threshed at one operation by the combine, as is not always possible in the Spring Wheat country. Farm machinery can be used even on the hills of the Palouse country in southeastern Washington, because the slopes of these hills, which were formed

by the winds out of fertile dust of volcanic origin, are very regular in contour. Yet in 1925 the ratio of number of tractors to number of farms was only about one-third as high in the Columbia Basin as in the other two Dry-farming regions.

Number of Small Farms

The comparative scarcity of tractors is presumably related to the fact that though the average size of farms is comparable with those of the other two regions, a much higher proportion of the farms are small. In 1925, half the farms consisted of fewer than 260 acres; whereas in the other regions but one-fifth of the farms were of so limited a size. Only large farms can bear the expense of farm machinery.

Productivity

The little farms could not be made to pay at all were it not that the deep rich soils of the Columbia Basin produce a comparatively large amount of wheat to the acre. In Washington the wheat farms, from 1919 to 1924, averaged over twenty-two bushels of wheat per acre, two-fifths more than the average yield for the United States, which was fifteen and three-fourths bushels.

Contrasting Degrees of Prosperity

In contrast to the small farms, one-third of the number had in 1925 a size of 500 acres or more, and one farm in seven comprised 1,000 acres or over. The contrast between small and large farms, much and little farm machinery, poor and well-to-do farmers, is much greater than in the other two regions, where in 1925 more than two-thirds of the farmers operated from 260 to 1,000 acres each. The Columbia Basin, therefore, has less of that democratic equality proper to a new land, which is found in the Dry lands of the Great Plains.

Less A Pioneer Country

And though the initial development began at about the same period as in the other two Dry-farming regions, the land is not new in the same sense. The more intensive settlement and the extension of development of new areas that had taken place in the other regions since 1910 did not occur in the Columbia Basin. Between 1909 and 1919 the number of farms did not much more than hold its own; and in the next five years it declined by a little over one-eighth. The acreage in wheat, which in the other two regions increased by about one-fourth between 1919 and 1924,

here decreased by more than one-fourth, and in the four counties of the Big Bend wheat acreage fell off one-third. In the counties in Washington the total acreage in farms also decreased.

The population slightly more than held its own during the decade 1910 to 1920 in the twelve rural counties taken together, but it declined more than 5 per cent. in six of the counties taken singly, and gained as much as 5 per cent. in only four counties. Advance information from the 1930 Census indicated that between 1920 and 1930, population distinctly declined, especially in the villages. The Columbia Basin therefore had fewer newcomers than the Dry lands of the Great Plains; and a different spirit naturally prevailed among the residents.

Greater Advance in Road Improvement

Another way in which the Columbia Basin differs from the other two Dry-farming regions is in the extent to which roads have been improved. Here one-fourth of the farms were on surfaced roads, a much higher proportion than in the Great Plains.

THE CHURCH SITUATION

Less interest is shown in churches and Sunday schools in the Columbia Basin than in the newer parts of the other two Dry-farming regions.

Proportions of the People in the Churches

Only about one-fifth of the people of the Dry-farming counties of the Columbia Basin were members of the churches, a considerably lower proportion than for the two Dry-farming regions of the Great Plains.⁷

Counties covering about two-fifths of the area, 39.4 per cent., and containing nearly three-eighths of the population, 37.3 per cent., had ratios under 20 per cent.; and no counties had ratios even as high as 35 per cent. Of only one county, indeed, did the ratio exceed 30 per cent., a height surpassed by nearly half the counties of the other two regions.

On the other hand, the ratio of only one county fell below 15 per cent.; so that the three Dry-farming regions were alike in having few counties with very low ratios.

A Poorly Enlisted Section

A denominational official described to the investigator, as typical of this region, a large section of one of these counties for which responsibility had been assigned to his denomination by

⁷ See Appendix III, p. 283.

interdenominational agreement. There were six or eight little centers, in election precincts which extended over at least 150 square miles, and which in 1920 had a combined population of about 2,400. Two of the centers were exceptional in Dry-farming territory in that they were decadent mining towns. None of the centers had any Protestant churches save those of the denomination in question, although two had in addition Catholic churches served from elsewhere. One Protestant minister had been given charge of the whole area, organized as a circuit. He had churches at four points well apart, which he visited regularly. These churches had among them only thirty-six resident active members, an average of nine members per church. The same minister preached occasionally at one or two other points. Two or three centers had no religious ministry. Church buildings were dilapidated, with bulging sides and fallen bells. The chief recreation was the universal Saturday-night dance. One community was chiefly in the hands of bootleggers. "In nine years of neglect," said the informant, "people have got to the point where nobody cares very much whether there is church or not." Of one of the centers the official declared, "They could not have a Sunday school on a bet. There is nobody to lead it." Yet at some past time there must have been religious feeling here; four centers had both church buildings and church organizations.

A Strong Church

In a village not far from this circuit was a very different situation. Here in early days settled a man who was a strong Presbyterian. Whenever another Presbyterian came along, the investigator was told, "this man would break his neck to locate the newcomer near him. When some one came that was not a Presbyterian he would roll up his sleeves and help him locate down the river." In this way it came about that the settlers were not only church people, but people of the same church. Ever since, they had had a strong local-church program. In 1928 the church had a membership of 333 and a Sunday school enrolling 400—and this though by that time the community had five churches, and a population which, only 1,900 in 1920, had probably declined since that date. Here common religious traditions had been maintained by a strong church.

Churches on the Rocks

This, however, was an exceptional situation. The general testimony of those consulted was that the churches were "on the

rocks." A typical report was the following, which concerned specifically the Big Bend country:

Churches were once a factor in lots of communities. Hard times came; communities deteriorated; highways were improved and people went outside for buying and for social life. Now, in town after town, the churches are leading a miserable existence. Once this happened because there were too many churches. Now it is true even where there is only one.

Competing Churches

Lack of adaptation to environment is shown in the numerous competing churches in small places. Not that competing churches are peculiar to Dry-farming districts; but here competition is both unusually marked and uncommonly unfortunate. In the average Dry-farming district, as in districts of no other of the four kinds of poorly enlisted new territory, there are within reach of a common center enough people to make one good church. Many of them have recently arrived from sections where churches are well established, bringing their church traditions with them. In several communities where by good fortune a single church has been developed, the church has become strong and influential. In far more places, however, competition has put in place of a single church two or three feeble groups that have not enlisted public respect.

How this unfortunate competition has arisen is clear in the history of the two Dry-farming counties surveyed. In the absence of any broad outlook and of any interdenominational policy, local groups and denominational agencies planted churches for the folk of their own persuasions.

TRENDS

Dry-farming regions will long continue to exist. Wheat, a staple human necessity, can be produced in the semi-arid lands to better advantage than in areas adapted to more lucrative crops. The Dry lands are not likely to be otherwise than sparsely settled. The dry farm, according to Dr. O. E. Baker, must contain from 320 to 640 acres—that is, half a square mile to a square mile—in order to support a family. Even two families to the square mile would mean only about ten persons to the mile. Moreover, the increasing use of farm machinery tends to increase the size of farms.

Signs are not lacking that in the immediate future population may temporarily decrease. The demand for wheat, according to Dr. Baker, is declining. The low price of wheat would tend to decrease the amount raised, especially since in 1930 the Farm

Board advocated the restriction of wheat acreage. It seems probable that some land that has grown wheat may revert to use for grazing, the population density in such areas declining to that normal in Grazing country. The population of districts having many small farms, such as parts of the Columbia Basin, is expected to decline till an optimum population is reached.

It is expected that when the population of the United States and of the world increases sufficiently, the unused parts of the present Dry-farming regions will be cultivated, and also that even drier parts of the West will be utilized for crops. According to Dr. O. E. Baker, three-fifths of the present unimproved pasture and range is dry-farmable; 130,000,000 acres, or more than 200,000 square miles, thus being potential Dry-farming country.⁸

The outlook for the churches is somewhat brighter than in any of the three other kinds of new territory. The proportions of church-members in the population, for the forty-eight counties that had experienced no change of boundaries since 1899, rose not only between 1906 and 1916, but also between 1916 and 1926, when it failed to rise in most regions of new territory. During the latter decade a gain of at least one-tenth in proportion of the people in the churches was made in five-eighths of the counties. And in 1926 comparatively few of the counties had extremely low proportions of church-members.

On the other hand, there are also disturbing symptoms. For the oldest of the three Dry-farming regions, where it might well be expected that the churches in their longer history would have enlisted a larger proportion of the people, the proportion of the population composed of church-members is on the contrary lower than in the younger or recently progressing regions. Moreover, even in the newer lands where more families are still church-minded, large proportions of the people are not attracted by the small and ineffective country churches.

SUMMARY

The settlements of the Dry lands as farming areas was so recent that the inhabitants are in many places of the first generation; in others partly of the first and partly of the second generation.

The struggle to acquire domestic and public facilities up to the American standard in the face of slight and uncertain rainfall has been, and still is, a hard one. The population, although

⁸J. Russell Smith, *North America* (New York; Harcourt, 1925), p. 15, map, credited below to "Courtesy O. E. Baker, U. S. Dept. Agr."

several times more dense than in the arid Grazing country, is sparse and widely diffused. Two of the Dry-farming regions, including four-fifths of the combined area, are advancing in agricultural development and in population. The Columbia Basin, on the other hand, has recently shown some degree of decline.

The people of the newest Dry-farming areas, such as have brought religious traditions with them, are trying to maintain Sunday schools and little churches, with some help from Sunday-school missionaries and small home-mission grants. The people of older regions, on the contrary, show less religious interest and initiative, and among them there are fewer church-members. In certain localities having large groups of the same faith, churches have developed which enlist fair proportions of the population. In general, however, in the absence of interdenominational oversight and coördination, small competing churches have divided the church-minded people into ineffective groups. Indifference to churches is common, particularly in older sections that have been for some years without strong churches.

Chapter VIII

THE CHURCH SITUATION IN THE SIX KINDS OF TERRITORY

The six kinds of territory in which churches are weak and church-members few, together comprise more than a third of the area of the United States and contain three and a half millions of rural inhabitants. And the responsibility for affording religious ministry to the people of these vast hinterlands of the Church is largely a Protestant responsibility.

In limited sections, chiefly in the Grazing country, the people are predominantly Roman Catholic or Mormon; but Protestants form a large majority of the population of two even of the Grazing regions, and constitute more than four-fifths of the people in the Mountain sections, seven-eighths in the Great Lakes Cut-over region, and nine-tenths in the Dry-land areas. Among the rural inhabitants of the two older areas, non-Protestants are even less numerous than in the new kinds of territory: for they constitute only about 5 per cent. of the rural population in the representative counties of the Old Hilly areas, and less than 2 per cent. in those of the Old Level areas.¹

DIFFICULTIES PRESENTED BY THE AREAS

In all six kinds of territory the churches are confronted by conditions that make their work extremely difficult. In most of the areas only a few people can easily reach a given point.

Cut-over districts have only ninety-nine persons per ten square miles; Dry-farming regions, only forty-seven; Mountain sections but twenty-one; and Grazing country only twelve. In the last kind of territory a typical hamlet with the range country about it within a circuit of ten miles contains only about 240 inhabitants. Though the two kinds of old areas have a denser rural population, yet the Old Hilly areas, are divided by the topography into many small communities each with but few inhabitants.

¹ Roman Catholic figures for church-membership are almost equivalent to Catholic population. They include baptized infants; and though scattering families in each area, Catholic by inheritance, are not affiliated with the church, these form a very small part of the population in each case.

Sparsity of population, though common to the four new kinds of territory, has important variations. It differs, for one thing, in degree. If the Grazing country, the most sparsely settled, be taken as a basis of comparison, the Mountain sections have nearly twice as many people in proportion to area, the Dry lands four times as many, and the Cut-over sections eight times as many. Diagram XXIV shows the difference in density of these four kinds of territory and also the contrast of the density of all these with the densities of the two older types of area.

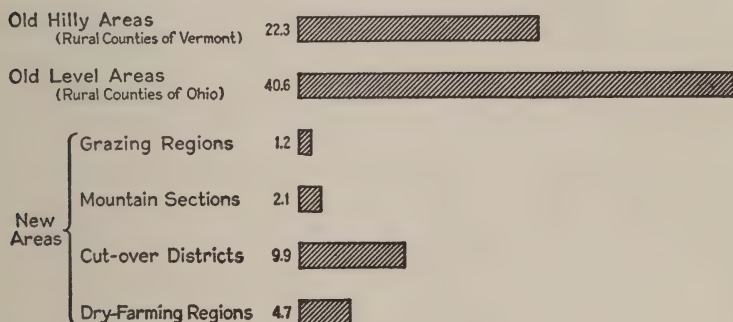


DIAGRAM XXIV
Rural density of six kinds of territory, 1926

Moreover, the few people present in these various areas are differently distributed. In the Grazing country and the Dry lands the families are scattered more or less broadcast, like dots on a map. The centers are long distances apart, and the ties between them and the hinterland are very tenuous. Territory with small populations thus distributed dot-fashion, including Grazing country, Dry-farming country and counties combining Grazing and Dry-farming districts, forms more than one-fourth of the entire area of the United States.

In the Mountain regions, on the other hand, the families are strung along the valleys; and in the Cut-over areas they are thickest in the more fertile or the earlier-settled districts. Moreover, in both these last two regions, and particularly in the Mountain districts, hamlets and little villages, relics of mining and lumbering days, are comparatively numerous; and a larger proportion of the people live in them.

To illustrate by extreme cases, in the twenty-four Dry-farming counties of the Dakotas, seven-tenths of the population live on farms; while in the eighteen Mountain counties of Colorado, the farm population forms little more than a quarter of the total number of inhabitants. The arrangement of most of the people

in the Mountain and Cut-over areas, accordingly, may be compared to beads on a chain.

The denser population of the Old Level areas is partly broadcast on evenly distributed farms, as in the Grazing and the Dry-farming regions only more closely set, and is partly grouped in many centers. In the Old Hilly areas, the arrangement of the people is more like that of beads on a chain, as in the Cut-over and the Mountain sections.

ISOLATION

The number of possible constituents of churches is limited also in all the areas except the Old Level areas, by the fact that many of the people live in great isolation. In both the Mountain and the Hilly sections small communities are shut away by hills, mountains or ravines. In the Grazing country and the Dry-farming regions the disposition of the few centers along rivers and railroads leaves large stretches of hinterland so far from centers that it is impracticable to attend the churches in these centers. And in the Cut-over lands, similar isolation is occasioned by stretches of marsh, unbridged streams, and stump-land poorly served by roads. Population is not only small but is declining in one Mountain region, in one Dry-farming region, and in two Grazing regions, representing the kinds of new territory; and in the old areas, the inhabitants of the open country and the smaller centers are decreasing in number, especially in the Old Hilly areas.

FEW CHURCH-MINDED PEOPLE

Not only are the total community populations regularly small in the four new areas, but the church-minded people of the communities are still fewer. Many of the new-area settlers have never had religious affiliations. Among these are virtually the whole of certain large elements of the population, such as miners, section hands on railways, oil men, lumberjacks, cowboys, and sheep-herders except when Mexican. Others in the extreme pre-occupation of early pioneer struggles have lost the habit of churchgoing. Still others, children or grandchildren of settlers, stand aloof from the church services within reach, even when their forbears were church workers.

In both kinds of old areas, too, large proportions of the families, especially in the open country, have no contacts with the churches, and no wish for such contacts. In all the areas, moving-pictures are shown on Saturday or Sunday; ball games are most commonly on Sunday afternoon; and public dances that

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are regularly held on Saturday evening last till all hours of the morning. With these and other forms of amusement consuming time, strength and attention, even people with churchgoing predilections often fail to get their children dressed in time for Sunday school, and are frequently missing from church services. The great majority never think of going to church at all.

FEW ADHERENTS OF PARTICULAR DENOMINATIONAL CHURCHES

Even more limited than church-minded people in general are the possible constituents of particular denominational churches. The people of the new areas are of widely different origins; and many of the groups have brought with them deeply rooted religious traditions different from those shared by any other group. Considerable proportions of the population, in each of the new areas, consist of foreign-born. The percentages for the sample counties were as follows in 1920:

	PER CENT.
Grazing country	8.2
Mountain sections	14.5
Cut-over lands	18.5
Dry-farming regions	13.8

Immigrants together with their children, form more than double these proportions of the population.

The foreign-born were in most cases of many different origins. Even in the Grazing area, which had the lowest proportion of the four kinds of new territory, one of the counties surveyed, which, by the way, had a proportion of foreign-born below the average for the type, had in 1929 immigrants from eighteen foreign countries among the naturalized aliens living in open-country election districts.

The older areas have lower proportions of immigrants. The religious situation in the Northeastern Highlands, however, has been greatly disturbed by the substitution of French Canadians for old-stock Americans on some of the farms. Moreover, in Ohio, racial groups that came to America several generations ago still retain their solidarity and their churches, especially German Lutherans and Mennonites of three varieties.

In all the new regions, moreover, the old-stock Americans have come from many widely separated parts of the United States. Those of some sections include both Northerners and Southerners, with their two sets of corresponding denominations. A particular district may easily contain Congregationalists from New England and Presbyterians from New York; Disciples from

Ohio and members of Churches of Christ from Tennessee; Baptists from Rhode Island, Friends from Pennsylvania, and adherents of Christian Union churches from Kentucky. In the Grazing county last referred to, the 4,000 or so registered voters of twenty country election districts included representatives of thirty-eight states. Many of these people are kept from joining local churches by a sense of loyalty to the denomination in which they were brought up. And some of those who would disclaim any positive religious beliefs still retain enough of their early impressions to avoid churches their parents would have considered heretical.

In the Old Level areas, the number of constituents of country churches has been diminished by the superior attractions of churches in neighboring towns and cities. The same tendency is at work in a lesser degree in the Old Hilly areas, in country neighborhoods from which large centers are readily accessible. Even in the newer regions, many churches in districts connected with large centers by improved roads are feeling the effects of a similar withdrawal of adherents. The tendency is particularly marked in the Columbia Basin, and near Seattle, Denver and other large cities.

Throughout all the areas, too, radio sermons and services have lessened the audiences of many churches in several different ways. They have raised the standard of great numbers of the people regarding preaching and church music. The varied theological positions exemplified by radio speakers tend to lessen the exclusiveness with which listeners identify themselves with sectarian churches. And the possibility of participating in a radio service is frequently made the excuse for staying away from local church services.

SMALL FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The new areas, having been settled in recent years, are for the most part the scene of intense struggle both personal and corporate. The environmental conditions are such that the financial return of labor is very uncertain. Reserves have not yet been accumulated. The scanty money incomes of the people are largely used for payments on mortgages, improvements on property, needed equipment, and taxes.

The poverty of the Dry-farming regions, however, particularly those of the Great Plains, and that of the fertile sections of the Great Lakes Cut-over region, is expected to prove a passing stage incident to early development; while the poverty of the more unproductive Cut-over districts, of the Mountain sections,

and of the poorest portions of the Grazing country, since it derives from inherent disabilities, will probably be permanent.

In spite of these variations, however, the financial margins from which contributions to churches are made, if made at all, are extremely narrow in all the new areas, and are likely to continue to be so for some time to come.

Even in the older areas the financial condition of many country churches is decidedly cramped. With population declining and sometimes changing in denominational constitution, and with prosperity somewhat lower than in the past in the Old Hilly areas, the number of adherents of particular churches has in many cases become considerably reduced. Meanwhile, church expenditures have increased and the standard of family giving has not greatly altered.

IMPEDIMENTS TO CHURCH ACTIVITIES

The activities of the churches in all the new areas are seriously hindered: by distance and bad roads, by the hills of some areas and the mountains of others, and in many cases by the snows of winter. Then, too, the minister is usually in charge of several churches, and is often dependent upon inferior railway service.

LOW DEGREES OF SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Closely-knit social relationships, in which the people of a community know one another well and are accustomed to working together in both religious and practical affairs, are lacking in all six kinds of territory. The two youngest areas, the Dry-farming and the Cut-over regions, have not had time to develop close social integration. In the Mountain sections and the Grazing country, though these lands have been settled somewhat longer, social development has been arrested at an early stage. In the two older areas, relationships within small communities and country neighborhoods, formerly closely woven, have been relaxed by the tendencies that are changing the social pattern of these areas. Though this slackening of mutual ties is appreciable among the hills, it is much more pronounced in the Old Level areas, where the new forces at work have encountered no topographical barriers.

Another kind of impediment to church activities, found exclusively in the new areas, lies in the absence of various facilities that the older areas have acquired. Such facilities include suitable meeting-places. Very many country districts of the new lands of all four types have no assembly room for preaching ser-

vices or Sunday school except the little country schoolhouses with their cramping stationary desks. Another hindrance of this class is the absence of telephones in scattered districts. A third is the difficulty of obtaining various kinds of supplies requisite for religious education, illustrated lectures, socials and the like.

In all the regions, it is clear, the churches are confronted with serious difficulties of many kinds. Many of these difficulties, though fundamentally similar, are present in the several areas in different degrees, and frequently manifest themselves in highly contrasting forms. Others are found only in the four new areas, or only in the two old areas. All the areas alike, however, offer many almost insuperable difficulties to successful religious ministry.

THE GENERAL CHURCH ENTERPRISE

The churches of these six areas which are so difficult to serve form part of the general religious order of the United States; and this order has a number of features that interfere with effective ministry in such territory.

MANY DENOMINATIONS

Religious work, to begin with, is conducted by churches representing many uncoördinated denominations. The 214 counties constituting the samples of the four kinds of territory contained, in 1926, churches representing more than forty-five denominations; among which were twenty-two of the twenty-eight denominations having more than 200,000 members, including the twelve largest denominations.² The forty-five denominations, moreover, do not include in all cases the minor denominations grouped by the Religious Census as "All other bodies."

The proportion of counties in which the different religious bodies were represented in 1926 varied greatly. Roman Catholic churches were far the most widely distributed, being present in nine-tenths of the sample counties. Among Protestant churches, the Methodist Episcopal Church led in breadth of field, since churches of that denomination were found in seven-tenths of the counties. Lutheran churches of one or more of ten different synods, of which five served racial groups, were in more than half the counties, as were also Protestant Episcopal churches. Presbyterian, U. S. A., churches were in nearly half the number; and Congregational churches were nearly as widely

² Data from *Census of Religious Bodies: 1926*; p. 49.

scattered as the Presbyterian. Next in order came Northern Baptist churches, found in two-fifths of the counties; and next, Disciples of Christ churches, present in one-quarter.

Most of the counties outside Utah had churches of several to many denominations. In nearly three-fourths, five denominations or more were represented, and a good many of the remaining fourth had fewer than five churches in all. There were as many denominations as churches in seventeen counties, and as many Protestant denominations as Protestant churches in six counties more.³

The counties of the Agricultural Section of Ohio, representing in this connection the Old Level areas, contained churches of twenty-five denominations. In Vermont, however, the situation was somewhat different. To the Roman Catholic Church and five Protestant denominations belonged in 1926, five-sixths of all the churches in the state; and three-fifths of the churches represented three Protestant denominations. Nevertheless, competition was acute here also, for churches of the three Protestant denominations were generally scattered over the state, two or all of them being often found either in one community or in neighboring communities.

The churches of the new areas were planted by denominational agencies acting independently of one another during the early days of settlement, which fell within the period of denominational expansion. When a new county-seat was to be inaugurated, emissaries of interested denominations tried to be first to get a foothold. As it was not always known at which of several points a future county-seat would be located, and as large ideas of the possibilities of future expansion were current, little competing churches were started at many centers that unexpectedly remained small.

In a few rare instances colonies were planted by denominational groups, particularly by Mennonites and by members of the Church of Brethren; and scattered instances of colonies representing other Protestant denominations were not unknown. In most cases, however, the planting and fostering of churches was not a matter of far-sighted and comprehensive religious statesmanship, but the result of haphazard, uncorrelated activities of many different denominational agencies.

³ Counties with only one church were not included among the seventeen, and counties with only one Protestant church were not included among the six.

THE NUMBER OF CHURCHES IN PROPORTION TO AREA

The distribution of churches in relation to area differed greatly from area to area. The number of churches per 1,000 square miles was as follows for the four kinds of new territory:

Grazing country	3
Mountain sections	5
Dry lands	18
Cut-over districts	31

The Dry-farming areas plainly had more than five times as many churches according to area as had the Grazing country, and the Cut-over sections had nearly twice as many as the Dry lands. A still greater disparity appears when the three churches

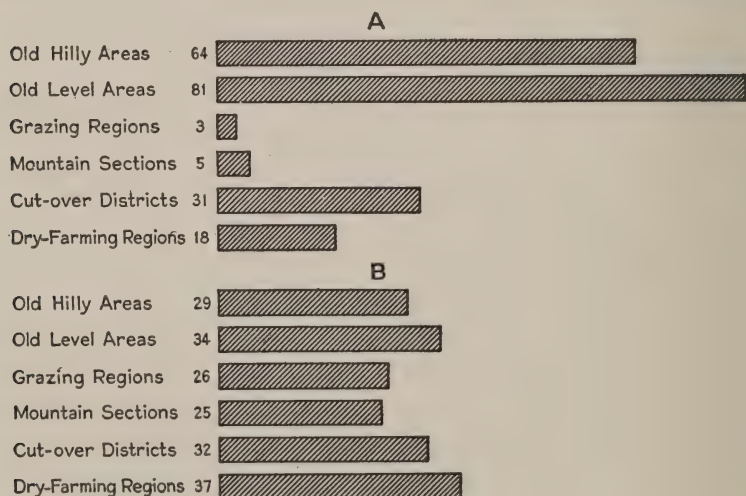


DIAGRAM XXV

(A) Number of churches per 1,000 square miles, 1926, and (B) number of churches per 10,000 inhabitants, 1926, for six kinds of territory

per 1,000 square miles of the Grazing regions, and the five of the Mountain districts, are compared with the sixty-four of the Old Hilly areas, and the eighty-one of the Old Level areas. The comparative frequency of churches in relation to area is shown for the six areas in the upper part of Diagram XXV. If evenly spaced, the churches of the Grazing lands would be eighteen miles apart and those of the Mountain sections fourteen miles apart; while the distance between neighboring churches in the Old Hilly areas, would be but four miles, and in the Old Level areas, only three miles and a half.

Without regard to distances and other hindrances in the way of ready access to the churches by the people, and to the people by their ministers, the churches are distributed in all six areas roughly in proportion to the number of people; so that each kind of territory has from two and a half to three and a half churches per 1,000 inhabitants. This is shown in the lower part of Diagram XXV. In the case of schools, either the instruction is brought within the reach of small groups, or else pupils are transported to larger schools; but it is not so with churches.

The churches are poorly distributed not only as to number but also in respect to location. The larger centers have as a rule from several to many competing churches, while many hamlets and wide stretches of open country have no churches at all.

DENOMINATIONAL OFFICIALS

The superintendents and other denominational officials in charge of the churches of the new areas have been moulded by denominational influences and are bound in loyalty to serve the churches and guard the interests of the denomination each represents; so that on the maps imprinted on each man's mind, as on those in his office, the prominent things are the churches of his own denomination; and the districts where neither it nor any other denomination is rendering effective ministry do not stand out clearly.

Many denominational officials when interviewed in the course of the present study, with some notable exceptions, showed a tendency to minimize the extent and the needs of such districts.

Many were not aware that such of the territory of any of the six kinds as was in their fields presented unusual difficulties to church work; and few of those that were aware of this, perceived the differences among the areas with sufficient clearness to understand that special methods might be required for each.

Moreover, many of the superintendents seemed to feel that their responsibility for any community was met if the place was "served" even if only by a monthly preaching service attended by but three persons. An assertion frequently made by the officials was, "The people have cars, and there are churches within their reach. If they do not attend services, it is their own fault."

One or two of the men added, "If we applied that principle in distant lands, what would become of foreign missions?" But this reaction was rare. Few of the men had conceived of the ideal of equal religious privileges for all individuals; and those that had such a conception did not think it could be achieved within a religious order composed of unrelated denominations.

LIMITATIONS ON THE QUALITY OF MINISTERS

The quality of the ministers available for the areas studied is affected by several conditions of the general religious situation. The salaries of ministers throughout the United States have not risen in the same proportion as the income of other professional men; and in the financially handicapped regions under consideration this condition is intensified.

The effect of comparatively low salaries is supplemented by the lack of educational facilities for the minister's children, and by the comparative absence of fellowship and intellectual stimulus for the minister himself. Men of ability and training, if they ever enter these hinterlands of the church, are constantly drawn away from them, either to sections where better salaries are offered or to more highly paid openings in other lines of work. Their places are taken by men who have difficulty in finding pulpits in richer areas.

The proportion of rural ministers of the leading Protestant denominations that have not been graduated either from a college or from a seminary is higher in the far-western states, exclusive of Utah, than in any of the New England or Middle Atlantic states or in several of the states of the Middle West; and without raising the question as to how far colleges and seminaries fit their graduates for religious ministry to the new lands, such a training is at least a highly considered qualification in the eyes of the people of these areas. The denominational superintendents find it very difficult to raise the standard of ministerial service, partly because of the poverty of the churches, and partly because the huge denominational pension systems tend to keep the less well-qualified ministers in pulpits.

STEREOTYPED CHURCH POLICIES

Peculiar as were the new areas in many radical respects, denominational officials, ministers, and local church workers were all trying to apply in them church policies with which they or their parents had been familiar in older regions. How this came about will easily be understood. Suppose a family from Ohio had gone to live in Wyoming. In Ohio in 1890 there were 123 rural inhabitants to the square mile; and the people were well distributed over the whole area. Incorporated centers were an average of four and a half miles apart; so that, not taking into account the many unincorporated villages,⁴ if incorporated cen-

⁴The North Central Division had in 1920, in addition to incorporated villages, half as many that had not been incorporated. Data from Fry, *American Villagers* (New York; Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1926), p. 36.

ters had been evenly spaced no family would have been more than three and a half miles from one of them. In such territory, one church with full-time resident minister for the small village, or several such churches and ministers for the larger village, found both a wise and a practicable arrangement. There were within easy access enough people to furnish members for one or more strong working churches, and to support them adequately; and the people were already bound together as members of a community.

Families moving from such an environment to Wyoming about 1890 found there a very different state of things. To each inhabitant there were two and a third square miles of area; and even if the fifteen incorporated places then in the state had been evenly distributed, the farthest families would have been fifty-seven miles from such a center. With the actual distribution, many families were much farther away.

FULL-TIME RESIDENT MINISTERS

As soon as the people could afford to have a full-time resident minister such as they had had in the entirely different environment of Ohio, they naturally tried to have one. But when this policy was applied to a village in the midst of a broad hinterland that was not well linked up to it by community ties, the village received practically all the service, and most of the country was neglected.

CIRCUITS AND YOKED CHURCHES

Again, in sections of the East where instead of large villages there were groups of small villages or hamlets which lay near together and were readily accessible one from another, these could be served adequately through the circuit system or through yoked churches. But when these methods of providing ministerial service were applied to lands where centers were widely spaced, and in many cases were isolated by serious barriers of various kinds, the minister spent a large part of his time in trains and on junction platforms, so that the communities where his churches were, and to an even greater extent the country districts around them, received very little of his time.

COMPETING CHURCHES

The fact that churches were planted by many denominational agencies acting independently of the others, without joint consideration of the needs of each community, inevitably led to inequalities of distribution. In many centers several churches were

organized. In these sparsely settled regions, the presence of more than one church in a small center or country neighborhood inevitably meant small memberships and inadequate finances; and in consequence poor equipment, unattractive programs, and insufficient ministerial service.

NEGLECTED DISTRICTS

In the old days of intense denominational activity, it could be assumed that every district would have a church within reach, through spontaneous activities of local groups or of denominational officials, without concerted investigation or programs of church extension. But in the new lands, in the absence of comprehensive interdenominational policies, hundreds of hamlets and many thousands of square miles of hinterland are without religious service, and in other localities unsuccessful attempts at ministry have soon been abandoned.

SMALL HOME-MISSIONARY GRANTS

In the East during early periods of development, it was natural that the aid given to any one country church by missionary boards was small and consisted almost invariably of money grants of at most a few hundred dollars, since in those days a hundred dollars meant far more in a minister's budget than it does today.

As time passed, small sums were still considered adequate; for the aided church was frequently in a community having other churches, so that the failure of one church would not be disastrous; and besides, aid in divided fields was coming into disrepute. Moreover, the local church program had become conventionalized; and missionary demonstration parishes were rare in these sections.

In the new lands, on the other hand, the churches were often so very poor that they could not maintain effective work in the absence of large individual grants from outside.

Each of the stereotyped policies is found in all the kinds of new territory. In the Grazing country, for example, to which the full-time resident minister has been shown not to be adapted, circuits and yoked churches are equally inappropriate; competition in centers and neglected hamlets and countryside are both present; and there is lack of large-scale missionary enterprises. The same thing is true of the Mountain sections, of the Dry lands, and above all of the Cut-over regions.

With so many variations among the regions, it might be expected that different forms of religious ministry would be devised

for each. But no; in every region the attempt was being made to apply stereotyped policies with little adaption to widely varying conditions. The same methods are accepted as standard for the churches of the sparsely settled Grazing regions as for those of the fully occupied Corn Belt. Similar policies are in use in lands where the people are scattered like dots in a map, and in those where they are grouped like beads on a chain. No variations are held to be necessary to allow for transecting mountain ranges, clay roads, deep winter snows, or general straitened resources.

Neither are the contrasting future prospects of different regions taken into account; although some of the regions are destined for further development, others are so handicapped that progress is unlikely in the immediate future, and in still others prosperity and population are declining.

INEFFECTIVE CHURCHES

Considering, on the one hand, the obstacles to church work presented by the areas studied, and on the other hand, the lack of adaptation to such conditions displayed by organized Protestant Christianity in the United States, it is only to be expected that the churches of these areas should be ineffective.

LOW PROPORTIONS OF THE PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP

The four new areas, so far as they are predominantly Protestant, and also many country districts and small communities of the two old areas, had fewer church-members in proportion to population than did the United States as a whole, and also had fewer church-members proportionately than certain sections of the United States containing but little territory of any of the kinds studied. The contrast is shown in Diagram XXVI.

Not only did the counties taken as units or grouped by states have comparatively low proportions of church-members among the people; but within all the counties surveyed, the open-country districts and the smaller centers had relatively fewer church-members than did the larger centers. This is shown graphically for each of the counties surveyed in Diagram XXVII. Here the vertical line shows the average proportion of church-members in the population for the United States generally. The bars, which represent the proportions for communities of different sizes and for the open country in the respective counties, end far short of the national average, with only two exceptions. In every county the proportions for the country districts were smaller than those for centers of any size. The highest propor-

tions were for towns or cities, where present, in every case but one. The proportions for villages were in eleven counties higher than those for hamlets; and in the five counties having both larger and smaller villages, the proportions for the larger villages were the higher in every case but one. With a very few exceptions, then, the degree of enlistment varied with the size of the community; and with no exception whatever, it was lowest for the open-country districts.

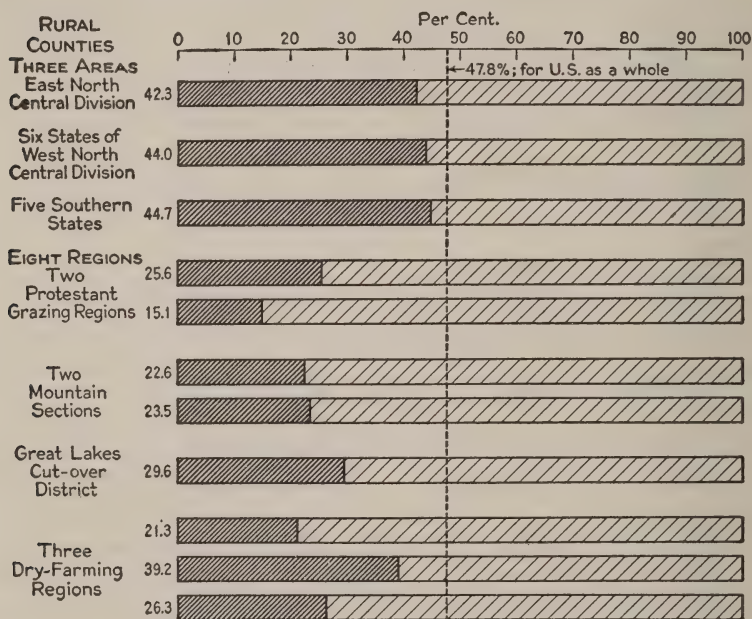


DIAGRAM XXVI

Proportion of church-members in the population, 1926, for eight regions predominantly Protestant, representing four kinds of territory, in comparison with proportions for three areas containing only small amounts of such territory.

The variation with kind of district is partly explained by several differences in the conditions prevailing in the several kinds of districts. As between open country and large center, in the latter the church is easier of access and the church building and its bell are regularly in evidence; human relations are closer, so that the influence of any institution is more strongly felt; the church has a better plant, more ministerial service, wider social contacts and more elaborate systems of religious education. Moreover, the minister and the other church workers commonly take more pains to reach the townspeople than they do to reach

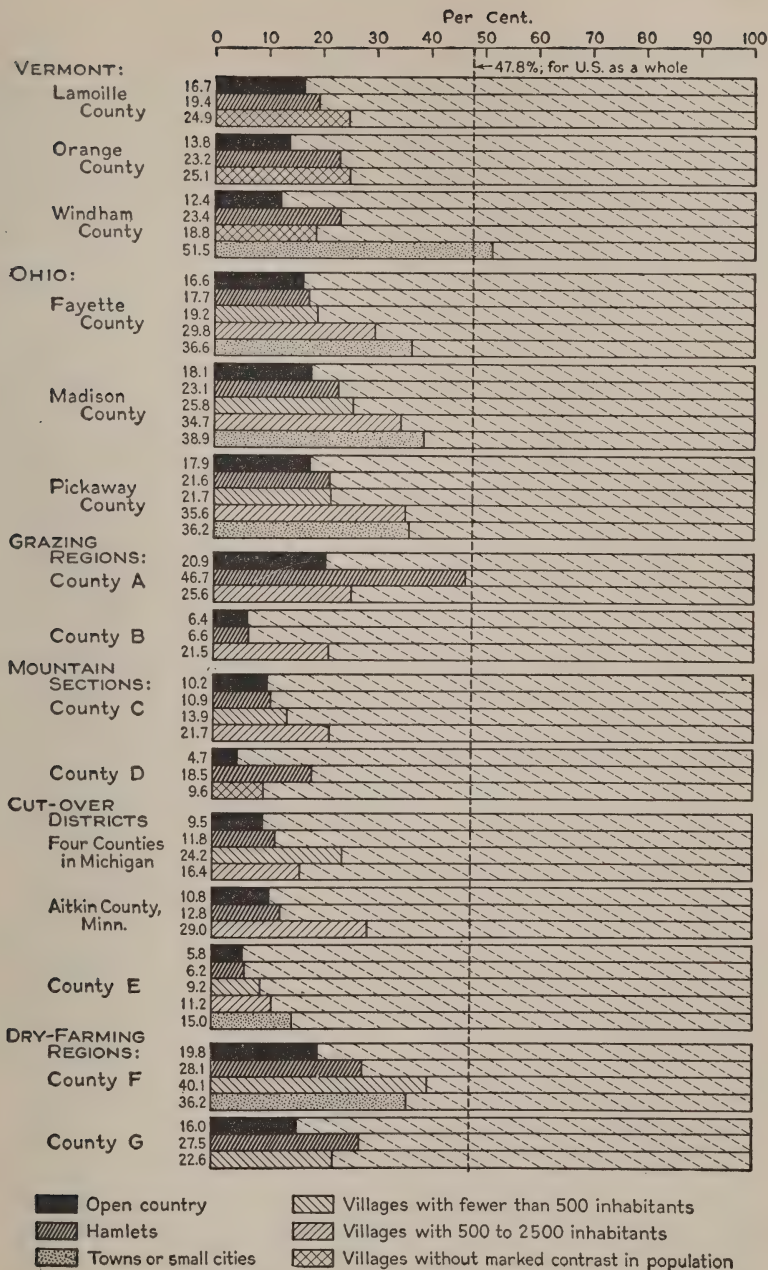


DIAGRAM XXVII

Proportion of population in the church-membership, 1926, for communities of different sizes, in counties surveyed representing six kinds of territory

the scattered farm families. Most of these differences prevail also to some extent between the church situation in towns and that in villages, and between the situation in villages and that in hamlets.⁵

Among the individual hamlets, and especially among the various country districts, there was a considerable difference in the proportions of the people enlisted by the churches; and in all the counties visited extended portions of the territory, containing no small total number of inhabitants, felt but slightly if at all the influence of the churches of the county.

SMALL CHURCHES

The churches lacked attraction for the people partly because most of them were small, weak affairs. In the four new areas the average membership of the Protestant churches was only sixty-eight, while that of the Roman Catholic churches was 161, and that of the Mormon churches was 370. The average Protestant church-membership for the individual areas ranged from seventy-three for the Dry-farming regions to only forty-six for the counties surveyed in Vermont. The churches of small centers and open-country districts averaged much smaller than this, and a large number of them had fewer than twenty-five members apiece. Being small, the Protestant churches cannot afford a modern church building, or much fuel, or light, or music, or any of the many other things utilized in a modern church program. In Vermont many churches had invested funds; but this was not the case in any of the other areas.

INADEQUATE MINISTERIAL SERVICE

Moreover, the ministerial service at the command of these little churches, as was shown in connection with the general religious order, is limited both in quantity and in quality. Many of the ministers retain the standards of pastoral work of a day when the preparation of a sermon was the minister's chief task, not realizing that in these days of popular literature and radio services their hearers have little regard for sermons by country ministers. In spite of striking exceptions, the majority of the

⁵ Farm population contains somewhat larger proportions of adults than does village population; but for the Mountain and Pacific divisions the differences are only of three to five points. This statement is based on data from the *Census of Agriculture, 1926*, and on figures in Fry's *Census Analysis of American Villages* (New York; Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1925), pp. 138 and 139. The difference in age-distribution, therefore, does not go far toward explaining the contrast in proportions of church-members for villages and for the open country.

preachers have at the same time a low standard of the length of the minister's working day.

LUKE-WARM LAY WORKERS

The lay workers in the churches, moreover, are frequently half-hearted and shame-faced in regard to their church responsibilities. This is most general in the oldest regions of the new areas; but even in the Old areas, both Level and Hilly, where the churches have for generations occupied a position of influence, there were found districts where it was regretfully confessed that many church-workers failed to render whole-hearted and loyal service. The tasks they attempted, too, were often of a ladies-aid type, not altogether adapted to win respect in a men's country like the regions of the Far West.

LOW POPULAR ESTEEM

The general public outside the churches was little affected by their influence. In the new areas, people in general spoke slightly of the churches if they spoke of them at all. One reason for this is that the work of the churches is in strong contrast with that accomplished in all the areas, even in the most handicapped of the new lands, in agriculture, forestry and education, and in highway development and other public works.

In each of these fields activities are unified under the supervision of federal, state or county agencies. Programs in the various fields tend toward comprehensiveness; and plans are both far-reaching and detailed. Efforts are made to provide equality of privilege for every individual, including those in isolated situations. Operations are conducted with an approach to efficiency, the conditions of the environment being taken into consideration, and recent discoveries and inventions being utilized to some extent. Enterprises are supported by huge expenditures; and they show progress. Because of all these facts, the secular activities have won the respect and coöperation of the people.

With such achievements before their eyes daily, people have little respect for the churches, whose ways of working are so different at every point. A large majority have completely dropped the habit of churchgoing, and churches no longer seem to them matters of vital concern. What with luke-warm church-members and a cynical public outside the churches, the people of the new areas have neither the will nor the ability to acquire more vital and influential churches for themselves.

In the Old Level areas, the churches of the larger places are regarded with respect, and the dying out of many country

churches is a matter of general concern; yet even there, and in the Old Hilly areas as well, very few families of non-members care any longer to attend church services.

CHURCH SITUATION NOT IMPROVING

In the states of the Middle West the proportions of the rural population that were members of the churches were higher in 1926 than in 1916; but this was not invariably the case in the new areas. In the four Grazing regions and in one of the Mountain sections, indeed, the proportions were lower in 1926 than they had been a decade earlier. These regions, moreover, were the older ones, where the churches had had a longer time in which to enlist the people. Unfortunately, the older regions of the new areas had proportionately fewer church-members than the younger. In Diagram XXVI, the longest bars representing proportions of church-members, are those of the two youngest regions, the Great Lakes Cut-over region, and the Spring Wheat Dry-farming region. In these older regions, too, the popular attitude toward the churches is even more indifferent than in the other regions considered.

Church decline appears also in the Old Level areas, where the abandonment of country churches is proceeding at an increasing rate, and the members left behind are drifting away from church connections in increasing numbers.

Moreover, in the Old Hilly areas, as exemplified by Orange County, Vermont, although the proportion of people in the membership of churches has changed but little in fifty years, the proportion of families containing members or adherents of the churches is only two-thirds of what it was in 1880.

EFFECTIVE CHURCH SERVICE IS PRACTICABLE

Notwithstanding the fact that effective church service is exceptional in the new areas, there are several indications that it is possible even under their difficult conditions.

HIGH ENLISTMENT IN CHURCHES OF CERTAIN FAITHS

For one thing, where elements whose inherited religious affiliation is to certain faiths preponderate among the people, the proportions of church-members in the population are comparatively high. This is well illustrated in two of the Grazing regions.

Grazing country, it will be remembered, exhibits in the highest degree some of the conditions that render church ministry particularly difficult, such as widely scattered families, isolation, pov-

erty, and imperfectly developed institutions. Yet while the two Protestant regions had low ratios in 1926, the Central Intermountain Plateaus including Utah, had a proportion well above the average for the United States; and western Texas, which has many Mexican Catholics, had a proportion nearly as high. The contrast in proportions of church-members between the two Protestant regions on the one hand, and on the other the two regions having a predominance of Mormons or Catholics, is shown in Diagram XXVIII.

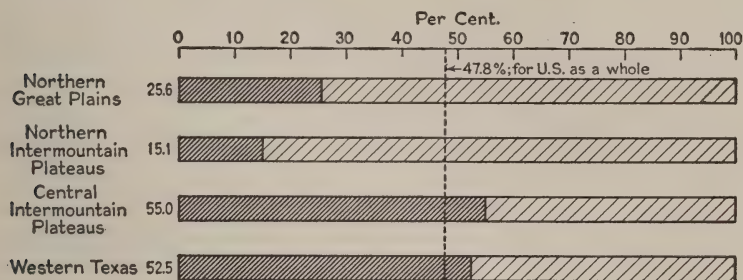


DIAGRAM XXVIII

Proportion of population in the membership of churches, 1926, for four grazing regions

In other parts of the country, counties with comparatively high proportions of church-members had many Catholics or a considerable number of Catholics and also of Lutherans, especially Lutherans of racial synods. Evidently, to enlist high proportions of the people in churches is not an impossibility. The success in this task of the churches named is doubtless derived from a large number of factors, including some relating to the racial character of their constituents, some connected with their doctrines and their forms of worship, and some associated with their methods of teaching and of church administration.

The relative importance of these and other factors would doubtless be appraised differently by different observers. All would probably agree, however, that whatever the means, the churches named succeed in maintaining among their adherents continuous religious traditions from generation to generation.

Effective Protestant churches have similarly preserved uninterrupted religious traditions through strong local churches. The Mennonites frequently do this; and it has been done even in unfavorable surroundings by churches of familiar Protestant denominations, such as the Methodist and the Presbyterian, whenever a group large enough for effective action has been united in a single church organization that has had sustained

activity for a long period of years. A few such examples are found in every one of the six kinds of area.

Additional reason for believing that the church situation in the handicapped areas is capable of being improved may be drawn from what has been accomplished in Vermont through coöperative efforts. At critical periods extensive religious campaigns have been undertaken; and through interdenominational measures applied over a period of thirty years, church competition has been lessened or even eliminated in many small communities.

Moreover, the fact that extended operations in many secular fields are meeting with distinguished success affords reason to believe that the peculiar difficulties encountered in the regions considered, especially in the new ones, are not unsurmountable when attacked with united effort, wise planning, and adequate support.

FAVORABLE ATTITUDES

Furthermore, the people of the various areas manifest certain attitudes that are favorable to the development of some form of organized Christianity. The Golden Rule is everywhere venerated, and efforts are made to live in accordance with its dictates. In the new areas the loosening of former church ties has resulted in undenominationalizing a great majority of the people, so that to unite them in single churches would be easier than in sections where, though far larger proportions of the people are church-members, strong denominational churches have competed with one another for generations. Again, social distinctions do not separate the people into classes either in the new lands or in the Old Hilly areas. In only one of the six kinds of territory, that of the Old Level areas, are social barriers strong enough to affect church welfare.

Again, in these areas the isolation of many of the people, the small number of interests, and the immature stage of social institutions, afford favorable conditions for the development of churches of a strong and challenging character. Society is at a plastic stage. Many people are turning away disgusted from the frequently sensuous moving-pictures and the unrestrained and often rowdy public dances. They want something better.

Finally, scattered individuals whose parents were church-members, and who were brought up to follow the maxims of Christian ethics, but who themselves have stood aloof from churches, are coming to feel that the training they have given their own children outside church influences has not been enough. They see

their sons and daughters doing things they consider wrong; and some of them consequently seek religious instruction for their children. In very few districts, however remote they may be from church influences, is it difficult to get parents to let their children attend church vacation schools, Sunday schools, or week-day courses in religious education. On the contrary they welcome such opportunities. They seem to hope that the religious habitudes and relationships with their ethical implications, which were interrupted in their own experience, may be developed from early years in their children.

SUMMARY

To extend the effective ministry of the Church in areas where its influence is now weak is a task fraught with serious difficulties, some of which are characteristic of the regions themselves, while others are features of the religious order of the United States. In spite of these obstacles, favorable conditions are also present. The fact remains, however, that up to the present time the stereotyped church policies have failed to win to the churches more than small proportions of the people of these areas.

Chapter IX

ATTEMPTED REMEDIES

In this study of vast areas where traditional methods of church work have proved to be unsuitable and ineffective, it was found that several measures outside the stereotyped procedure of local churches had been tried with varying success. Three of these measures had been inherited from the past, but had been more or less modified; the others were comparatively new.

CHANGE IN PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION

Both the new methods and the modifications of older methods were associated with a change of emphasis, expressed or implied, in the psychology of religion. The standard type of religious experience for many denominations had been conversion, understood as the salvation of separate individuals through a sudden transformation, usually experienced in connection with exhortation. From this point of view preaching was the primary function of the minister; the circuit and the preaching point were effective expedients; and the minister's work centered in sermons, prayer meetings and evangelistic meetings. For undeveloped fields, the appropriate workers were itinerant evangelists and colporteurs.

But the emphasis had shifted toward gradual development. Accordingly, the means stressed were religious education, continuity of pastoral care, and the preparation of a social environment adapted to foster the kind of development desired.

MODIFICATIONS OF OLD METHODS

Among surviving older methods were several the original aim of which was evangelism; that is, the effort to make converts solely by preaching the gospel.

EVANGELISM

Two kinds of agents were once largely employed to spread the gospel on home-missionary ground. The first kind consisted of itinerant evangelists, who delivered their message by preaching to groups at single services or series of services. The others were

colporteurs, who went from house to house carrying their message to individuals and family groups, and selling, or distributing free, copies of the Bible and the New Testament, with tracts and other religious literature.

At the time of the survey, both sorts of evangelistic workers were still employed in considerable numbers by three kinds of religious bodies. Of these the one exciting most attention consisted of ecstatic groups such as the Four Square Gospel, the various Holiness bodies, and the Apostolic Faith Mission. A second kind of bodies consisted of certain bodies of exceptionally literalistic tendency, such as the Seventh Day Adventists, the International Bible Students, and the Plymouth Brethren. The third kind consisted of the Latter Day Saints, who sent their missionaries two by two not only to various parts of the West but all through the country, even as far as New England. The aim of the missionaries of all these groups was to make converts.

When, however, such large and familiar denominations as the Northern Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians, with many smaller denominations similar in character, employed evangelists, the aims proposed generally included other things besides conversion. For example, in the West the Northern Baptists had long used railway chapel cars, each a railway car fitted with a chapel for services at one end and living quarters for an evangelist at the other. Such cars were in use at the time of the survey in a number of western states. They were not used merely as halls for revival meetings. The policy was to have a car remain at one point until a church had been organized and a church building erected, then to move it to some other place.

The Baptists also employed five automobile chapel cars, which contained quarters for the evangelist and his family, a tent for services with organ and folding chairs being conveyed when desired on a trailer. Three of these cars were devoted to work for racial groups. The other two were employed to strengthen weak Baptist churches and establish new ones in the Southwest, where, as in the South generally, the conversion type of religious psychology was still dominant.

The Presbyterian logging-camp missionaries still included a few of the old evangelistic type. Most of them, however, had come to emphasize the improvement of conditions in the camps, toward which their influence had materially contributed, and the performance of such friendly services as visiting injured lumberjacks in hospitals and aiding the foreign-born to become naturalized.

Often, too, in the use of student workers during the summer vacation, a change of objective was also evident. Instead of being sent as preachers to single weak churches, the majority of students were employed for a six-day week in conducting church vacation schools, and in various other forms of community service, often under supervision, and sometimes as assistants to the experienced heads of larger parishes.

Even the Methodist Episcopal church, which had originally stressed conversion, though still sometimes employing so-called evangelists, gave them new functions. Here is a typical account of the work of a modern evangelist in an undeveloped section of a western state:

This year we have tried the experiment of a District Pastor or Evangelist. X excels in his social approach to communities, as an evangelist to high school youth and to young married groups. . . . X is an unusual helper to our small churches.¹

Several points in this passage are significant. The use of an evangelist is not the ordinary practice but an experiment. The worker is given the alternative title of "district pastor," with the function of aiding weak churches. His social approach to the community is commended. And his specifically evangelistic work is chiefly concerned with young people. That his work even for the young was not purely evangelistic in the older sense is shown by the fact that in certain communities visited by the investigator he had led the young people in such practical tasks as adding a kitchen to the church building.

HOME-MISSION AID

The second remedial measure handed down from previous generations was home-mission aid.

Legacies from the Past

The system of making grants to supplement pastors' salaries retained four inherited features. In the first place, a large part of the huge sums expended in this way were appropriated to churches in older regions, where the proportions of church-members in the rural population were comparatively high and were rising, much less being devoted to the new and handicapped areas where the number of church-members was relatively fewer and was not rising. For example, in the Mountain division, almost all of which represented one or another type of poorly enlisted

¹ *Minutes of the California Annual Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, 1928, p. 61.*

territory, one-third of all the church-members belonged to the Methodist Episcopal or the Presbyterian, U. S. A. denominations. Of the total amount of aid given to native-white churches in the United States by the Presbyterians, churches in the Mountain Division received less than one-tenth.² The sum appropriated by Presbyterian boards to the Mountain Division was little more than a third as much as that devoted to the Middle West. Indeed, it was only 5 per cent. greater than that granted to thirteen of the fifteen presbyteries of the single state of Ohio,³ although the area of the Mountain Division is twenty-one times as large as that of the whole of Ohio; although in spite of its low density its rural population was one-fourth greater in 1920; although its Presbyterian churches were much weaker, their average membership and annual expenditures being alike little more than two-fifths as large;⁴ and notwithstanding the incomparably greater environmental difficulties. The average membership of the unaided Presbyterian churches in the Mountain Division was no larger than the average membership of the aided churches in the East North Central Division, and smaller by one-fourth than that of the aided churches in the Middle Atlantic states. The same contrast in membership prevailed between the samples of aided and unaided Baptist and Episcopal churches of Dr. Fry's pamphlet.⁵ The Methodist Episcopal Church, moreover, gave its native-white churches in the Mountain Division only one-ninth, 11.7 per cent., of the total appropriations to native white churches in the United States.⁶ Both these major Protestant denominations had inherited practices regarding the disposition of home-mission money that resulted in small appropriations where help was most needed. To the eight large states of the Mountain Division the two denominations together appropriated only \$164,138.

² Data from the source tables in Fry, *Home Mission Aid* (New York; Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1928). As figures for two synods in the East and the Middle West were not available and were therefore omitted from the grand total, the proportion was presumably well below one-tenth.

³ Data from *A Brief Survey of the Aided Churches of the Synod of Ohio*, mimeographed report by the Department of Budget and Research of the Presbyterian Board of National Missions, p. 9. From this source other data regarding Presbyterian home-mission aid in Ohio are also drawn.

⁴ Forty-two and two-tenths per cent. and 41.6 per cent. respectively.

⁵ *Home Mission Aid*, pp. 34 and 35.

⁶ Data from a mimeographed report of official missionary appropriations of the Methodist Episcopal Church for 1931, made available through the courtesy of Dr. Mark A. Dawber, Superintendent of the Department of Rural Work. Other statements regarding Methodist aid are based either on the data of this report or on additional information furnished by Dr. Dawber.

A second legacy from the past was the practice of appropriating large amounts to churches in cities, although city churches were invariably in the presence of other churches of similar denominations, although they had large constituencies upon which to draw for funds, and although cities had relatively more church-members than rural territory.⁷ The Methodists gave as large a total amount to churches in cities of more than 10,000 inhabitants as they did to churches in smaller cities, towns, villages, hamlets and the open country combined. The Presbyterians aided one in every five of their churches in cities of 25,000 and over.

The average grant to city churches, moreover, was large. The national average for Methodist Episcopal aided churches in cities of 10,000 and over was \$800. The average sum granted to the Presbyterian churches in centers of more than 5,000 inhabitants in thirteen presbyteries of Ohio was \$1,340; and in the nation in general, two-fifths of all the Presbyterian grants of \$1,000 or more were made to churches in cities of more than 25,000 inhabitants.

A third inherited tendency of the home-missionary situation, which had recently been strengthened by diminishing contributions, was the policy of aiding churches in "strategic situations." The resulting policy is frankly expressed in denominational minutes of a western state, as follows:

The constantly diminishing returns received by the Board of National Missions render it impossible to secure funds to occupy new fields offered and difficult to sustain the old. This economic necessity teaches us to pay more attention to the strategic centers and less to the fields that have no future as self-sustaining churches. With a limited amount of aid to fields it is important that the funds will bring the largest fruit for the Kingdom of God and the Presbyterian Church. . . . It has grown so we are but scratching the surface of the territory we occupy. . . .⁸

As several to many denominations recognized the same points as strategic, the result had been the granting of aid to competing churches of similar denominations in many centers, some of them cities but still more of them small county-seat towns. In some centers, indeed, two or more churches of similar denominations received aid. In this matter the county-seats of the eight counties in new territory that were surveyed were typical. All had at least one aided church. In all but one the aided church

⁷ Fry, *The U. S. Looks At Its Churches* (New York; Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1930), p. 15.

⁸ *Minutes of the Synod of Colorado*, 1928, report of Committee on National Missions.

was in the presence of other churches, and in five it was in the presence of churches of similar denominations. In each of three, two churches of similar denominations both received grants.

Aided churches were also found in twenty other centers of the same counties. Only four of the forty-six mission churches in centers were the only churches present, and only nine were the only Protestant churches. Taking churches of all denominations into account, twelve of the nineteen communities with more than one Protestant church had at least two churches that received missionary grants.

Such data are rarely obtainable without a survey; but through the Home Missions Council of a western state the sums appropriated in 1925 by Baptist, Congregational, Methodist Episcopal and Presbyterian, U. S. A. agencies had been tabulated for eighteen Cut-over counties. In thirteen of the 137 town and country communities having aided churches, two or more churches received aid, the total number of churches aided under such circumstances being twenty-three. The amount of competitive aid constituted between one-seventh and one-sixth, 18.2 per cent., of the total granted to churches in these counties by the four denominations concerned.

Still another traditional missionary policy consisted of giving small grants to rural churches. The average grant to aided Methodist churches in places of under 10,000 inhabitants was \$180. Of rural Presbyterian aided churches, nine out of ten received less than \$700 a year; three-fourths received less than \$500; and three-tenths, less than \$200. Of the Episcopal rural churches of Dr. Fry's samples, 29 per cent., and of his Baptist rural churches, 44.8 per cent., received less than \$200. And of the aided churches of four denominations in the eighteen Cut-over counties already mentioned, over two-thirds received less than \$250.

Moreover, if the average annual grants of rural missionary churches of the Mountain Division is added to the average sums raised locally by the same churches, the total is for Presbyterian churches \$1,619, for Episcopal churches \$916, and for Baptist churches \$1,897. Such sums as these had proved too small to provide the sort of minister and the sort of program that could enlist the average citizens of the handicapped areas, whom we have seen to have grown estranged from the poor churches provided for them, religiously indifferent, and often cynical in their attitude toward all church work. Some denominational officials believed that home-mission money spent in such dribblets was as much wasted as would be a thousand dollars spent in unsucces-

fully attempting to float a treasure ship when to raise it effectually would require ten thousand. Many felt in the words of one of them: "I sometimes feel that the big scale of missionary undertaking is the only scale."

The whole system of home-mission grants was strongly criticized in many parts of the West. One sign of the general feeling was that a certain denominational executive in a published report suggested naming the denominational missionary agency the "Board of Missions and Church Extinction."

New Tendencies

Strong as was the influence of tradition in the administration of home-missionary funds, several new tendencies were at work. First may be mentioned a disposition of the supervisory officials of certain Protestant denominations in some areas, usually in regard to limited questions and specific fields, to give a missionary problem joint consideration. An instance of this was the tabulation of home-mission grants in eighteen Cut-over counties, utilized above. The aided churches of a number of denominations were indicated in a state directory of churches published by the Montana Home Missions Council, not long after its organization in 1919.

Joint consideration was followed in a few cases by joint action. In one of the Grazing counties surveyed a federated church in the county-seat received equal grants from both denominations represented in the federation. Similarly, an interdenominational larger parish in a Mountain county received equal amounts from both denominations concerned.

The importance of coöperation regarding missionary enterprises in handicapped territory was recognized in the findings of the North American Home Missions Congress in December, 1930, as follows:

The denominations should share coöperatively in maintaining the work in purely missionary fields where the prospects of financial support are remote and where the possible denominational advantages are meagre.

Moreover, large single grants were being made to a few rural churches, especially churches in territory allocated to one denomination, or to demonstration parishes, and in particular to demonstration larger parishes. The counties surveyed, and the remedial experiments investigated during the present study, furnished a number of examples of a denomination's supplying unusually large amounts to ensure success in a definite project. One of these large sums discovered during the survey was given to a racial

church, another to an Indian church; but certain native-white churches were also given large subsidies. A church in allocated territory, the only Protestant church in the community, received \$800. A similar sum was paid a competitive church on the understanding that the minister should work in the country.⁹ One larger parish received \$1,300, of which \$1,000 paid half the assistant minister's salary, and \$300 went toward maintenance of the car of the head minister. Another larger parish visited was in a valley containing seven defunct churches of four denominations. Several of these churches had received aid, and at least one had been a missionary church for thirty-five years. A devoted and talented young minister was engaged for work in the smaller centers. The first year the Board paid \$2,000 of his salary, which was \$2,200 plus \$300 for car-maintenance. Public interest was roused, the first little church to be revived was filled to overflowing at its services, and the sum needed from the Board was soon reduced to \$1,200 a year.

The administration of home-mission aid, in short, though it was still largely conditioned by inherited policies, nevertheless showed rare signs of two new tendencies, interdenominational coöperation and the application of comparatively large sums to allocated communities and larger parishes.

UNATTACHED SUNDAY SCHOOLS

The last to be considered among traditional means of providing religious ministry for undeveloped territory is the unattached Sunday school. In frontier days, this form of work had considerable importance. Leaders were available among settlers who had been brought up in the churches of older regions. Many Sunday schools were organized and fostered by Sunday-school missionaries of several denominations, and by those of the American Sunday School Union. If a community developed about such a school, it often became the nucleus of a church. The church was frequently, but not always, of the denomination that had fostered the school. Out of the 250 Sunday schools founded in Arizona by one Sunday-school missionary, for example, had developed nineteen of the thirty Presbyterian churches of the state, and also a number of churches of Baptist, Congregational, Disciples, and Methodist affiliations.

Since the early days, the situation of the little schools had greatly changed. New communities were no longer being developed to anything like the same extent. The children of the original settlers, brought up in the early Sunday schools or in

⁹ But see p. 108.

primitive frontier churches, did not share their parents' interest in religious services, or manifest any willingness to take the lead in conducting Sunday schools. "Twenty-two years ago," said a Sunday-school missionary—and several others said the same thing in other words—"many a man would drive eight or ten miles through the mud with horse and buggy to superintend a Sunday school; but today few men will drive five miles in a car to do so."

The little Sunday school had not proved capable of perpetuating itself. Moreover, the public schools had greatly improved both in methods of teaching, in discipline, and in singing. A contrast between public school and Sunday school had thus arisen that tended to discredit the amateur proceedings of the Sunday schools. Finally, the new enlargement of the world through good roads and cars, the multiplied forms of recreation, and the growing preoccupation with secular interests, all weakened the pull of the neighborhood school. The result was fewer and smaller Sunday schools. In the Dry-farming country of eastern Washington, for example, even between 1917 and 1928 the number of union Sunday schools declined three-eighths, and the number of communities having a Sunday school declined one-third. Testimony to similar decline was given in all sections visited, except the newest districts of the Southwest.¹⁰

Sunday-school missionaries were still maintained all over the West by two agencies, the American Sunday School Union, undenominational, and the Presbyterian church, U. S. A.; and scattering individual missionaries were employed by several other denominations. Part of the time of Sunday-school missionaries, however, was frequently devoted to serving weak churches without ministers.

The policy of Presbyterian missionaries was to place the Sunday school under the oversight of a neighboring church. A few schools in the exceptional places lying within the area of a larger parish had been made a part of the new enterprise. The policy of the American Sunday School Union, on the other hand, was to keep its schools from association with denominational churches, and to hold occasional group meetings for those of their schools within reach of a common point.

Regarding the usefulness of the detached Sunday school in 1928 opposite opinions were expressed. Some witnesses believed that the day for such schools had past, pointing out that leadership was poor, the schoolhouse quarters uncomfortable, the ama-

¹⁰ See p. 191.

teur proceedings often unattractive, and the period of existence in many cases very brief.

On the other hand, believers in the continued usefulness of these schools pointed out that some schools did have strong leadership and did endure. Even a poor school, added such partisans, was better than entire absence of religious services and religious education. A Sunday school would be a good thing for a country neighborhood, said they, if it did nothing more than ensure the children's being clothed in their best on Sunday and kept from squabbling around the ranch house or the crossroads store. They added that every school both helped to develop the leaders, and gave to remote children what might well be their sole introduction to the characters and great truths of the Bible, and their only evidence of something beyond their material surroundings. Such witnesses would conclude by saying that a crust was better than no loaf at all, and that the detached Sunday school, inadequate as it was, should not be abolished until it could be replaced by something better.

NEW FORMS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

New forms of religious education that were being developed in poorly enlisted territory were the church vacation school and, in a few sections, week-day religious education.

Church vacation schools reached children with no other religious teaching in many remote neighborhoods of the hinterland. As many as fifty such schools in a year had been conducted in Montana by student workers under a single denomination. Similar work was done in other western states. Though the vacation schools lasted only from one to two weeks, it was believed that lasting impressions were made on the children. In older areas the church vacation school was employed to supplement the Sunday school and to attract children not hitherto reached with the aim of holding them through the year.

The most promising example of week-day religious education observed on the field trip had been developed by a young woman who after completing courses at college and normal school had specialized in religious education, and had taught several years in the public schools. She had organized weekly classes in religious education at ten country points of a considerable district. For each class she had secured the sponsorship of some local church or woman's organization, which paid the charge for her time. She spent the five school days of the week in teaching most of the classes and in supervising students whom she had

put in charge of a few additional classes. On Sunday, she visited Sunday schools as chairman of the county council of education.

NEW METHODS

In addition to these three inherited but modified measures for serving poorly enlisted territory, there was a group of measures different from anything previously attempted. Several of these grew out of the new objective already mentioned, that of making the community safe for the development of character. It came to be realized that this ideal was not being attained in two kinds of territory, the under-privileged and the over-privileged. On the one hand, many small communities were receiving only rare preaching services from a non-resident minister, and wide stretches of hinterland had no religious ministry whatever. On the other hand, in the "strategic centers" competing churches impeded the attainment of the objective in three ways. They prevented the adoption of a unified and comprehensive community program. They divided the available workers and contributions, thus weakening each individual enterprise. And they promoted a spirit out of keeping with the new ideals.

INTERDENOMINATIONAL COÖPERATION

To substitute some degree of coöperation for this state of things, the regional executives of certain similar Protestant denominations in several western states, one after another, were gathered under the auspices of the national Home Missions Council. State home-missions councils were formed, and surveys were made by teams of the officials.

Allocation

Following the team surveys, specific districts—either communities or wider sections which in some cases were of county extent—were allocated to individual denominations. To remove competing churches from allocated fields several devices were employed. By a method called "exchange," denomination A withdrew from one field in favor of B, while denomination B withdrew from another in favor of A. When pairs of equivalent situations were not found or local churches made difficulties, churches were closed without exchange. A third method was the union of competing churches of the coöperating denominations. The form of union preferred in the East was the federated

church. The program of federation in Vermont has already been described. In the West, however, federated churches were much less common. In the eight states of the Mountain Division, for example, the *Census of Religious Bodies: 1926* enumerated only thirteen. The denominational superintendents used their influence in favor of the united church of a single denomination.

Thoroughgoing allocation on a state-wide scale was first undertaken by the Home Missions Council of Montana, organized in 1919. This organization, on the occasion of its tenth anniversary, in a commemorative pamphlet, published a list of fields to which allocation and allied coöperative policies had been applied. These included sixteen fields concerned in exchanges; seven where there had been surrender without exchange; three where churches had federated and seven where denominational united churches had been formed; twenty-one county-seat towns having denominational community churches; and sixteen entire counties allocated to particular denominations.¹¹

The allocated counties were all composed of area of three or four types of new territory. Six consisted of Dry-farming territory, two of Grazing land, three partly of Dry-farming area and partly of Grazing country; the other five were Mountain sections. All were sparsely settled, not one having as many as six inhabitants to the square mile and seven having fewer than two persons per mile. Most of these counties were of very recent settlement, three-fourths of them, indeed, having been organized since 1910. They were experiencing not only the economic struggles of very early days, but the effects of protracted drought. Isolation resulted from mountain barriers in some cases and in others from wide hinterlands, gumbo roads, and snow drifts during the long winter months. Each of these counties was allocated to a denomination by the state Home Missions Council soon after its formation, and had therefore been under that system six or seven years at the time of the Religious Census in 1926.

At first thought it would seem as if the effectiveness of allocation might be tested by comparing the proportions of church-members in the population for the groups of allocated counties of each type, with the proportions for the sample counties of the type in the same region. When the test was applied, the proportions for the allocated Dry-farming and Grazing counties proved to be decidedly lower than the ratios for the corresponding

¹¹ Data from *Ten Years of Christian Coöperation in the Northwest* (New York; Home Missions Council, 1929), last page.

sample counties, and those for the Mountain counties slightly lower.¹² Moreover, the total church-membership of the allocated denominations was in no case equal to one-twelfth of the population; was in ten instances less than one-twentieth; and for four counties fell below one-fiftieth.

The test is not conclusive, however. These counties were allocated because they were unusually hard to serve and uncommonly backward in religious development. Considering the handicaps and the prevailing religious indifference, it is unlikely that in seven years a transformation could be effected that would show itself in the church-membership. Two questions are more to the point. The first is: Had the field actually been surrendered to the allocated denomination by the other bodies coöperating? Nine of the sixteen counties had in 1926 no church of the denominations coöperating other than the one to which allocation had been given. In several cases, this condition had been reached through a surrender of a field or a union of churches.

The second pertinent question is: What measures had the denominations to which these counties had been allocated taken toward the fulfillment of their responsibility? Nine of the county-seats were among those which the pamphlet already referred to listed as having denominational community churches. In at least half a dozen of the counties, larger parishes had been started with varying degrees of success.¹³ Something had at least been attempted in a considerable number of the allocated counties.

There is, however, another side of the picture. The denomination responsible had in one of the allocated counties, one church of only fifty-seven members; in a second county, one church which the current denominational minutes credited with thirty-four resident members; in a third, two churches with a total of twenty-four members; and in a fourth, one church of six members. The denominations responsible for these four counties

¹² The percentages compared are as follows:

Type	Allocated Counties		Sample, Same Region	
	No. of Counties	Ratio %	No. of Counties	Ratio %
Dry-farming	4	25.7	38	39.2
Grazing	2	12.6	14	25.6
Dry-farming and Grazing.....	2	18.8	..	...
Mountain	5	21.7	24	22.6

¹³ Some of the more notable larger parishes in Montana were outside these counties in territory allocated on geographical lines that did not coincide with county boundaries.

included all the three bodies to which whole counties had been allocated. These facts prepare us to understand certain suggestive words from an address by the retiring president of the Montana Home Missions Council:

The question as to whether work is being done to discharge the obligation involved has not been sufficiently considered. It has been cautiously asked on several occasions and let go at that.

Several difficulties stood in the way of effective service by an allocated denomination, even when competition had been eliminated. In the first place, the denomination had to work partly through local churches, and many of these churches felt no sense of responsibility to the hinterland and usually had very few lay workers. In a case in point, a certain village was allocated to denomination A. Denomination B closed its church. Then the church of denomination A lost its minister. It did not call another and for over a year had no activities except a small Sunday school. Finally a minister of denomination B in a neighboring community began to preach once a month in the church that had been closed.

A second difficulty was that ministers with the requisite qualifications and energy were very scarce. Thirdly, the available funds, both local and missionary, were almost invariably insufficient for effective service to wide districts with the characteristics found in poorly enlisted territory. Finally, the denominational superintendent had not always cordially adopted his new responsibility.

Considering all these difficulties, it is not surprising that even in Montana, and still more frequently in other western states, the responsibilities involved in allocation had not always been fulfilled. Some coöperating denominations had been more willing to accept responsibility for a field offered them than to withdraw from, or to refrain from entering, a field allocated to another denomination. Other denominations, while gladly surrendering certain troublesome and expensive fields, had done little or nothing in particular fields allocated to them. In a county-seat visited, for example, the allocated denomination did no work whatever. A national official described to the investigator, as an example of what frequently happened in allocated fields, a circuit he had just visited. He concluded with these words:

On the map, our church is serving that district, and no one will worry about it any more; but the neglect and degeneration there would be hard to beat. It is really allocated to the devil.

Allocation was generally accepted by western home-missions councils, however, as a necessary condition of effective service, particularly to the hinterland and its diminutive and widely separated communities.

THE LARGER PARISH

A new form of church work frequently proposed for allocated districts in handicapped territory was the larger parish.

Essential Features

The larger parish was well characterized in the report of a Methodist district superintendent as—

Not a string of disconnected preaching points, but a whole section of towns and country administered as one unit, with a related program. . . . The goal should be the setting up of a Christian social order in that area.¹⁴

This objective of united ministry to a natural unit of territory was the most distinctive feature of the denominational larger parish as conceived by its champions. Other features proposed as elements of a fully developed larger parish were a joint organization in which the different local groups were represented; and a staff of ministers, each being responsible for a specialized form of service.

Appropriate Fields

Only those districts were considered to be adapted to larger parish work that had actually or potentially a social unity, and that contained small communities or hinterland, or both, unable to obtain effective religious ministry in isolation. Such suitable districts were particularly common in Dry-farming area, where the wide hinterland, uninterrupted by barriers, with a not too sparse population and headed up in a county-seat, afforded favorable units of area. In Grazing country, though the very low density of the population occasioned greater difficulties, nevertheless a few larger parishes had been attempted. A mountain or forested district delimited but not obstructed by topographical barriers, especially in states where the county-seat had a marked leadership in economic, educational and social interests, was also considered a favorable environment, as was a large valley partly irrigated, the center of which was a small or medium-sized city. One larger parish was found in Cut-over area.

¹⁴ *Methodist Episcopal Church Minutes of the Montana Conference*, 1928, p. 33.

Types

When the center of a unit of territory where it was proposed to start a larger parish was a village or small town, this was always part of the parish. Where a city was present, a larger parish sometimes centered in one of the city churches. This plan was the one approved by the state religious leaders in Montana. These men claimed that the country people looked to the city as their center in all secular interests; that a city minister seemed to them a little like a pope, while for a country minister they had come to have very little regard; that the fact of being linked in a common parish with a big city church acted as a strong inducement to coöperation and activity; and that the lay workers, financial resources and plant of the city church afforded assistance of many kinds, while the outlying points gave the city people needed opportunities for service. A number of Baptist larger parishes in southern Michigan linked together a Baptist church in a city and, not the whole surrounding country, but weak or inactive Baptist churches in several neighboring towns.

A contrasting kind of larger parish surrounded a city but was purely rural. In favor of this type it was advanced that the time and interest of a larger-parish staff would be devoted entirely to the country work, and that the country people would take a larger and freer part in the councils and activities of the parish.

Advantages

The believers in the larger parish claimed for it many peculiar advantages. The chief of these were the following:

A unified and comprehensive approach to the area covered, including service to many districts that would otherwise be neglected.

The power to secure ministers of greater ability and better training.

A many-sided service, made possible by the staff of specialized workers.

Bringing to country and to town alike a wider horizon and the stimulating sense of being associated in a big enterprise.

Difficulties and Dangers

The larger parish was so young, its essential features so radically new, and its technique so largely in the making, that those attempting to conduct such an experiment encountered a number of dangers and difficulties. In the first place, it was sometimes attempted to combine in a larger parish districts with-

out bonds of economic and social unity. One so-called larger parish, for example, consisted of a half dozen hamlets along a hundred miles of railway. Part of the territory was in the mountains, part in Grazing country, and part in an irrigated valley. The people of the communities had nothing in common but the daily trains east and west, and the busy minister passing from one to another. When the minister left, the parish naturally fell apart.

In other cases an area not without unity of a sort but too large for unified service under the conditions, had been selected. A single minister had sometimes been set, or had set himself, to provide varied larger-parish activities for an area too big for one man to handle. The larger parish then tended to become, in the words of a denominational official, "just a minister running round and killing himself." When the inevitable happened, the larger-parish program collapsed.

Another difficulty consisted in securing ministers who had assimilated the larger-parish ideal, and who possessed the abilities, the training, and the energy required to effectuate that ideal in an environment where there was a strong secular tradition and very few lay church workers. The first two or three ministers of several experimental larger parishes failed to make good. When a parish secured a minister that put across a successful larger-parish program, too often either he over-worked or for some other reason there was a change of pastorate; and his successor frequently failed to carry on his work. The importance of continuity of service for seven or even ten years was coming to be emphasized.

Again, though relations within a staff of workers were sometimes very happy, yet, human nature being what it is and the tradition of ministerial independence being strong, friction occasionally developed which resulted in some cases in changes of personnel.

Instability

Considering the fact that the larger parish was in an experimental stage, and the difficulties experienced in obtaining suitable and permanent ministerial leadership, it is not surprising that some attempted larger parishes did not last long. Several that had been given considerable publicity, such as Benzonia, Séobey, Goshen Hole, and Cimarron, no longer functioned as larger parishes. Shortly after an illustrated leaflet on three larger parishes had been prepared at considerable pains and ex-

pense by a denominational publicity department, the three ministers moved, and all three larger parishes went to pieces.

Status

The larger-parish ideal was much and widely discussed in many parts of the West. Although some experiments in this form of work had been discontinued and some so-called larger parishes were merely circuits under a popular name, a number of promising larger parishes were in successful operation in handicapped territory. These were not only working out appropriate technical methods but were popularizing the principles underlying the larger parish ideal.

In comparison with the wide extent of territory adapted to enterprises of this kind, however, the actual going examples bulked very small indeed. It would seem that the truth of the matter was expressed by one of the leaders of the Home Missions Council of Montana when he said:

The Larger Parish Movement . . . cannot be said to be particularly effective or influential as yet, but it is shaping our plans, and will shape them more and more.¹⁵

SERVICE TO THE COUNTRY BY CITY CHURCHES

The help of city churches that did not form part of larger parishes was generally desired toward providing religious ministry for the neighboring countryside. The city churches had many things that the country communities needed very badly: good preaching, lay leadership, musical and other special talent and financial resources. Besides, since the country young people beyond the normal age of religious education were constantly coming to live in the city, the religious future of the city and its churches depended in part on country-church welfare. The two aspects of the situation were strongly expressed by one of the religious leaders of Montana, as follows:

My deliberate conviction is that the city churches, small and large, must more and more assume the responsibility for the spiritual care of their own country vicinities. If they do not I do not see how they can save themselves from ultimate depletion, and I do not see how the country, with its scattered dwellings and little towns and hamlets, can be saved from paganism.¹⁶

Exceptional city churches were making contributions of several kinds to the religious welfare of the country immediately around them.

¹⁵ *Ten Years of Christian Coöperation in the Northwest.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

Preaching

Of these services one was rendered chiefly by the city ministers. Some of these men, especially where the city church had no evening service, preached in the country in the afternoon. This was a common arrangement in Montana, where few country and small-center churches had resident ministers. In some cases the city minister had one or more regular outstations; in others, a country point received preaching now from one city minister and now from another; most commonly, a city minister with a rural outlook preached on irregular occasions at various country points. In Montana sermons were being delivered at country points by city ministers of at least four denominations: Congregational, Methodist Episcopal, Presbyterian, U. S. A. and United Brethren.

One of the ministers of a western city that has an interdenominational college supervised, under the auspices of the state Home Missions Council, a team of six men, five of whom were upper classmen intending to become ministers. This group provided regular services for little ranching and mining centers scattered over the county, which had not a single resident minister outside the city.

Rural Church Society

Interest in country-church conditions was stimulated in a county in California by a so-called Rural Church Society, in the membership of which were associated all those interested in the country church, whether they lived in the country or in the larger towns. Efforts were made to render the periodic conferences of this society illuminating and stimulating occasions.

Gospel Team

The gospel team, a group of laymen or of young people belonging to a town or city church, attempted to enrich or to provide services at underprivileged country points. The team usually included a quartette or chorus, the members of which also sang solos. One or two, perhaps, used a violin, harp or flute. Some of these teams were in considerable demand for their music, and went out freely almost on call. A few teams provided entire services. A team of ten young men, for example, were accustomed to supply the churches of their denomination within thirty or forty miles when these churches were without pastor. One led the meeting, another offered prayer, several gave short talks on related subjects, and others rendered musical selections.

Another variety of the gospel team consisted of quite young men and girls. On their trips they were accompanied by a speaker, and themselves provided the music, and possibly in addition gave in turn a message of a sentence each. The value of the amateur gospel team was considered to vary greatly with the gifts and training of its members. "Volunteer workers," said one informant holding this view, "sometimes go out and put on services that are really a joke." Poor work of this kind was held to be almost worse than nothing.

Some city churches had, not a formal gospel team, but a few volunteer singers and speakers, some of the latter being local preachers or retired ministers. These men provided regular or occasional services at country points, either singly or two or three together.

Work by Young People's Society

Young people's societies, under the direction of the minister, sometimes performed for country points services within their range of abilities. One society, for example, provided teachers for a country Sunday school, another put on a series of missionary programs, and others conducted socials that led up to the organization of a country young people's society or a group of Boy or Girl Scouts.

Church Vacation Schools

Several city churches conducted church vacation schools at neighboring country points, the city church either paying trained workers or providing volunteers.

Arm of the Church

Groups of people at a country neighborhood were sometimes members of a branch of a city church. This device was given a special development by the Baptists of certain western states. The branch was called by them an "arm of the church." This had as local officers a clerk and two deacons. A Sunday school was conducted, and once a month a preaching service was provided for the local group. New members were in some cases received directly into the central church. In other cases they were received by the local branch but baptized at the central church.

Country Members of City Churches

Some city churches had been successful in making many country members active participants in their church activities. A good instance of this was found in an irrigated fruit section.

Conditions were favorable. The roads were excellent. The population of the country districts was fairly dense. The fruit farmers were of an unusually cultured class. Some had originally followed professions, and many had lived in eastern cities and there had taken active part in city-church work. They had brought capital with them and had comfortable homes and good clothes. Everybody had cars, which made it easy to get into town. Moreover, development had been so recent that social institutions in the country had not set in small units before the day of centralization. Although country churches, some dead or dying and some active on a community basis, were found in the satellite communities of the valley, yet several of the large city churches, without any particular forethought, had come to include members from country districts near and far.

The city church of the Christian or Disciples denomination, partly because the minister and the regional superintendent believed that religious service should center in the city as did service of many secular kinds, took special measures to enlist members from outside the city limits. A little country church on the original site of the city church was absorbed, and the proceeds of the church property were used to improve the city-church plant. Members of other decadent churches of the denomination were received, although one weak country church preferred to keep up its separate existence. The whole atmosphere of the church and its subsidiary organizations was thoroughly friendly.

In early days a so-called "Valley evangelist" was employed, whose salary came partly from the city church and partly from home-missionary sources. This man through work at country points won new members for the city church. This work was afterwards discontinued as no longer necessary. A little later a large and well-equipped building was erected beside the city church at a cost of \$100,000, to shelter the work in religious education. At the time of the survey this church had over 2,000 members, being the largest church of its denomination in the whole region. Members from the country included seven of the twelve elders, fourteen of the thirty-six deacons, seven of the twelve deaconesses, the presidents of several subsidiary organizations, and many of the most active Sunday-school teachers, besides a large part of the rank and file of all church groups.

In spite of the great success of this church in enlisting country people, certain drawbacks to the work were recognized by the denominational superintendent and by the church workers themselves. In country neighborhoods where churches had been closed

a few old people and children, unable to come to town, were without religious privileges. The members were so numerous that not all the potential leaders could be given tasks. And attendance at worship, though large, was only a fraction of the membership. Indeed, the utmost capacity of the church auditorium with its extensions would not hold nearly half the members.

In spite of all these considerations, however, the church was doing strong work for and through country people. Its inspiring services and fellowship were believed to enlist more country families than the little country churches would ever have won, and to have made deeper impressions on the minds of the young people.

A Contrasting Situation

That this success could not be duplicated under all conditions was shown by the experience of another city church of the same denomination and in the same state. The second church was in a thinly settled and undeveloped Cut-over district without improved roads. Under the influence of a minister with an ideal of all-county service a large building was erected. Once the church was dedicated, the minister's health broke. His successor tried to carry out the proposed program; but he could not enlist for the work either the help or the contributions of the congregation. Between unfavorable conditions, loss of the original leader and lack of lay coöperation, very few country members were drawn into the church.

In spite of the variety of services rendered to the country by certain city churches, such churches were in a small minority. Most city church-members knew nothing and cared nothing about the lack of religious privileges frequently existing in their immediate vicinity.

WOMEN WORKERS

Women workers were being employed in church work for underprivileged rural districts by all the familiar denominations and in many states.

Tasks

The tasks assigned them were varied. In the first approaches to a neglected community they were frequently employed to visit in homes, making friends with the women and gathering the children in classes and societies, in preparation for more formal church work. Secondly, they were engaged in several kinds of

religious education, including church vacation schools, week-day religious education, and young people's conferences, as well as in the more familiar work through Sunday schools and organizations of young people. Others preached sermons, though they often called them talks, and performed all kinds of pastoral work.

Positions

These tasks were performed in positions of several kinds. Some women were assistants to the ministers of churches or larger parishes, the denominations employing women in this capacity including the Baptist, Methodist, Christian, Presbyterian and Episcopal bodies. Others, though nominally assistants, lived in a community other than the one where their superior resided and conducted the work there. Still others were in full charge of parishes.

A group of four women in a California coast county, called by the district superintendent his "rough riders," had each the care of a church and parish, and in addition performed together certain tasks for the rest of the county. They had made surveys of fields it was proposed to enter. They took charge among them of an isolated preaching point and Sunday school. One visited country homes outside her own parish. And together they conducted junior league institutes at which representatives of all the junior leagues in the county were gathered for a happy and stimulating week in a camp under sequoia trees.

Preparation

As preparation for their tasks most of the women employed in church work had had some years in college and a course in a school of religious education. Some had had in addition experience as teachers in public schools. On the other hand, a few had begun church work as ministers' wives and had undertaken regular pastoral work either to collaborate with a husband or to continue his work after his death.

Standing

In the Methodist Episcopal Church some women ministers were deaconesses and others had been ordained as lay preachers. The Congregationalists, Disciples of Christ, Orthodox Friends and United Brethren gave women full ordination. Several other denominations admitted women to the ministry under certain restrictions.¹⁷

¹⁷ Data from *The Relative Place of Women in the Church* (New York; 1927).

Recognition

The work of these women was appreciated by those they served. A superintendent who employed both men and women students in church vacation school work, asked in a questionnaire sent to the places where they had worked whether the people preferred men or women. The answers were decidedly in favor of the women. Churches with women pastors considered them "just as good as any man."

The denominational executives employing these women were unanimous in recognizing their adaptation to underprivileged districts. Superintendent after superintendent either said he was negotiating for additional women, or he wished he could have half a dozen more.

Qualifications

Among the circumstances and characteristics that made women desirable workers in religiously backward territory were the following:

First, the women were sought because they were cheaper than men. As a rule they did not have families to support, their education had been somewhat less expensive, and the standards of payment to women in other occupations were lower than for men. This fact made it possible to have a resident worker at small points where the salary of a man minister, low as it was, could not be afforded.

In the second place, women were more industrious than the average man minister. They were afraid they would not make good, and "they dug in and worked." Instead of feeling that their public mission was largely performed on Sunday, they were busy all day for six or seven days in the week.

Again, women were credited with a superior ability to reach children and young people. They were deeply interested in the development of the individual. They became friends and valued companions of their young people. One woman minister, for example, never locked the back door of her parsonage lest while she was away the Girl Scouts should require a saucepan, or a Leaguer with a report to prepare should wish to consult the minister's books. Even when she had a headache, that particular minister was accessible to a girl desirous of reading poetry to her. Other women showed exceptional skill in keeping in the background while the young people, hardly conscious of the skilled guiding hand, conducted the Sunday school and the societies.

Furthermore, a woman minister's domestic and social acquirements were of assistance to her among simple people. She could stand in a neighborhood store without self-consciousness and urge people to come to an approaching service. At the little church—or possibly the bare little community building or school-house—by a cordial welcome she could make the unaccustomed churchgoer feel at home. A Ladies Aid meeting she could transform into a social event by her gracious pouring of tea. Through the exercise of hospitality she obtained many opportunities for effective pastoral work. And her domestic equipment formed a laboratory for the happy development of her girls.

Finally, the woman minister did not despise small things. If she drove for miles to preach at a small country neighborhood, instead of fretting because only fourteen persons were present, she rejoiced in the first appearance of a single youth. If there was only a solitary boy to join the church, the occasion was celebrated in such a way that the other young people present were deeply impressed.

The number of women actually engaged in the work of the ministry was small. Yet because superintendents that had employed women recognized their peculiar qualifications, such officials felt that increased use of their services would help to solve the problem of religious ministry to handicapped territory.

USE OF MODERN INVENTIONS AND FACILITIES

New inventions and facilities had changed the environment in which churches functioned, in poorly enlisted territory as well as elsewhere. How fully had the churches of the frontier adapted themselves to the new factors in their environment, either in the way of somewhat passive adjustment, or through making active use in their ministry of these contributions to human welfare? Hardly at all. Yet a few suggestive experiments were being made, not all of them, however, by the familiar Protestant denominations.

Airplane

The newspapers reported a fatal accident to two Roman Catholic priests, who had used an airplane in their missionary journeys about the wilds of Alaska. A certain ecstatic denomination had used an airplane for transportation and for advertising purposes during evangelistic tours of wide thinly settled areas. Yet no Protestant denomination had provided a plane for any larger-parish minister of the Grazing country, though that is the only vehicle yet invented by the use of which such

far-flung parishes could be effectively served. A western doctor flew to the bedside of those critically ill, but so far as was discovered no minister.

Other Automotive Conveyances

A few churches had been inspired by the example of school busses to attempt the transportation of remote children or families to church and Sunday school. But these efforts usually depended on volunteer service, and in many cases those performing the task soon wearied of it, especially as the country people did not seem anxious to take advantage of the transportation offered them. School busses to round up Sunday-school children were frequently discussed, but the cost was usually considered prohibitive, since, as the explanation was worded in one instance, "Sunday schools are run on pennies and dimes." Yet busses were being used for this purpose in a small number of places.

A few state denominational agencies had tried the experiment of lending cars to certain rural ministers. The Congregationalists had at one time fifteen such "service cars" in South Dakota and fourteen in Montana. But it was found that the cars, not being the property of the men, were neglected; and the plan had been abandoned. Certain other denominational agencies, however, were providing a limited number of such cars. The Episcopalians of Wyoming, for example, had six, the upkeep of which they paid.

The evangelistic mission of escatic type that used the airplane also employed automotive vehicles of three other types. Two especially built "gospel cars," each carrying ten or twelve workers and an organ, they used for conducting street meetings. In a small motorboat they patrolled Portland Harbor with tracts and invitations to meetings; and in a larger one well filled with singers and speakers, they made evangelistic trips in the Cut-over country bordering on Puget Sound. In a large automobile bus equipped with an up-to-date amplifier and provided with living quarters for eight workers, they made long tours through Washington, Oregon, California and Idaho, holding meetings in the small centers.

Rural Delivery of Mail

Some utilization was made of the rural delivery of mail. A Protestant minister here and there used it to distribute a parish paper or an occasional bulletin. A pastor in a section where many families were sometimes imprisoned by heavy snows, on

such occasions distributed by mail mimeographed copies of his Sunday sermon. Home department quarterlies were also sometimes sent by rural delivery. At least two western Episcopal dioceses conducted through correspondence both religious education of the Sunday-school type and instruction leading toward confirmation, employing a special secretary for the work and distributing considerable religious literature. The Vermont Council of Religious Education distributed by mail the volumes of a loan library of books on religious education to Sunday-school teachers and others all over the state. The books were despatched from a hill farm five miles from the nearest hamlet. A large majority of the books were always out.

Those in charge of the ecstatic mission already cited in other connections made extensive use of the mail. They sometimes received 9,000 letters a month. They had files like a commercial organization, a staff of clerical workers and a printing press. The seaman's edition of their evangelistic paper was mailed regularly to every lighthouse in North America, and the prisoner's edition to every prison in the United States and to many in other lands. On some days 17,000 papers were despatched.

Radio

Several religious agencies in the West broadcast services. Those of two ecstatic faiths, the Four-Square Gospel and the Apostolic Faith Mission, which were the most widely discussed, are too well known to require description. Other radio offerings of a religious character frequently mentioned in the poorly enlisted districts visited, were the addresses of a certain Catholic priest and the sessions of an International Bible Students Sunday school. Religious services had been broadcast by an Episcopal missionary district in Grazing territory, but the work had been discontinued.

A radio Sunday school was conducted in Montana under the auspices of the Presbyterian Board of National Missions and through the coöperation of a small commercial sending station. The woman conducting it used several methods designed to counteract the disadvantages inherent in most radio listening in—its impersonality, irregularity, isolation and passivity. At the outset she asked children to send her their names and the dates of their birthdays; and as the days came round she announced each child's name and gave him a special birthday greeting. At the time of the survey 400 names and dates were enrolled. She also sent out quarterlies to all families writing for them, and

laid emphasis on the preparation of the lesson. Quarterlies were sent regularly to 500 families who were scattered in every county of the state save one, and in several neighboring provinces of Canada. On request she allowed her portrait to be printed on the stationery and on the Sunday-school calendar, that the people she addressed might think of her as a real person. She also offered to visit any friends of her radio listeners who should become patients at either of the two hospitals in her town and to send back word of their progress. Four days in the week she went to both hospitals and visited all rural patients whether or not their friends had requested this.

The program of the Sunday-school service was usually as follows: a selection of sacred music, either local talent or a victrola record; the birthday greetings and any announcements; stories and Sunday-school lesson for the children in a direct, conversational style; a prayer, during which the scattered listeners were asked to bow their heads and at the close to join in repeating the Lord's Prayer aloud; a full discussion of the lesson for grown-ups; and finally another selection of sacred music. Thousands of people remote from religious services regularly listened in at this unusual Sunday school.

CONCLUSION

Several new conceptions of religious ministry to handicapped territory were becoming prevalent, and in accordance with these conceptions experiments were being made in new methods of work and in modifications of measures hitherto employed. The new conceptions so far as expressed or implied in this chapter were these:

First, the standard religious experience had come to be considered the gradual development of character.

Second, because it was believed that character was unlikely to reach its noblest development in an unfavorable environment, the churches were more or less consciously endeavoring to reconstruct the community.

Third, since in small centers and thinly settled country districts competing churches must be too weak to affect the community situation, the largest Protestant denominations of the handicapped regions, acting in coöperation, had devised several methods whereby specific districts might receive unified service.

Fourth, coöperation of this kind had become possible through the surrender by these large denominations of any claim to the exclusive possession of essential truths or practices.

The principal methods through which it was hoped to attain these objectives were as follows:

The state home-missions council or similar agency.

Allocation, with the associated methods of exchange, withdrawal and the union of local churches.

Consultation and occasional coöperation concerning grants of home-mission aid.

Religious education, with emphasis on trained supervision, week-day courses and the church vacation school.

The larger parish, through which united service was to be provided for a unit of area, preferably by a staff of workers.

The employment of women workers.

The use of new inventions and facilities.

These methods were at an experimental stage. The applications of them were rare in comparison with the wide extent of the poorly enlisted territory. They often changed in character and frequently failed. They did, however, both indicate rising tendencies and serve as sign-posts toward more adequate ministry to handicapped areas in the future.

APPENDICES

Appendix I

THE TEST APPLIED IN MEASURING CHURCH EFFECTIVENESS

The test by which the effectiveness of rural churches was measured was the proportion of the population of an area enrolled in the membership of local churches. This test was chosen because it was both practicable and significant. Other measuring devices sometimes used or suggested were open to serious objections.

Church expenditures varied with prosperity. The presence or absence of a church or of ministerial service was not an unfailing indication, for the churches of some communities were very weak, and ministerial service was in some cases limited to a monthly appearance to deliver a sermon. Parish boundaries were not always significant, for on the one hand the limits of a parish might be extended by a very few families remote from the church in several directions; and on the other, area outside parish boundaries might be uninhabited. Finally, for attendance at church services adequate data were not available.

To apply the test it was necessary to obtain for a given district the church-membership and the population, both for the same date, and to compute the ratio of one to the other.

CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP

Except for the counties surveyed, where figures for resident church-membership were obtained from church rolls, the membership figures employed were those of the *Census of Religious Bodies*, which registers church-membership for every county in the United States. The data utilized had been furnished by the Census authorities in advance of publication, with other materials not published by the Census, primarily for use in certain studies conducted by Dr. C. Luther Fry; and the privilege of using the data was extended to cover the present study also.

The membership figures reported to the Religious Census lack uniformity in two respects. First, some churches, of which the Roman Catholic Church is the largest, include as members, baptised infants. Of the membership of the Roman Catholic churches, 28.2 per cent. were under thirteen years of age, according to the Religious Census of 1926; while for the Methodist Episcopal Church, members under thirteen formed only 8.8 per cent.; for the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., only 4.5 per cent.; and for the Northern Baptist Church, only 4.3 per cent.

Secondly, certain Protestant denominations include in their membership non-resident members. Of the total membership of the Protestant churches in 140 agricultural villages, non-resident members formed 10.8 per cent.;¹ and of the Protestant churches of 179 agricultural counties scattered all over the United States, 27.5 per cent. of the total membership was either non-resident or inactive.² Since, however, the bodies that observe one of these practices do not observe the other, the net result upon our ratios was to raise them slightly above what they would be if only active resident members over the age of confirmation were included in reported membership. For the counties surveyed, for example, the ratios of church-membership to population based on membership as given in the *Census of Religious Bodies* were in every case somewhat higher than those based on figures for resident membership obtained in the field. The discrepancies therefore do not affect the significance of the ratios as indices of comparative degrees of enlistment of population in churches.

Since part of the church-members recorded by the *Census of Religious Bodies* were no longer residents of the counties concerned, the percentages formed by using Religious Census membership figures in connection with figures for population are not proportions but ratios, the actual proportions of church-members in the population being lower than the percentages given. Lest the word *ratio* should prove confusing to the general reader, references in the text of the book are to proportions, not to ratios. This practice is justifiable, since it involves not overstatement but understatement. The percentages for the counties surveyed, however, are true proportions, since the membership figures obtained on the field related to resident members. In the counties surveyed, moreover, a second test was applied, namely, the proportion of families adhering to churches.

POPULATION, 1926

To obtain figures for population comparable in date to those for membership, which were for 1926, presented some difficulty, since the study was begun in 1928, before the figures of the Census of 1930 were available. For states within the field covered that took an accredited state census in 1925, the figures of the state census were employed. These states were Iowa, Kansas, North Dakota and South Dakota, with Florida also in a small part of the statistics.

To extend the application of the test to states in which no state census was taken in 1925, it was desired to estimate popu-

¹ Brunner, et al., *American Agricultural Villages* (New York; Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1927), p. 306.

² Morse and Brunner, *The Town and Country Church in the United States* (New York; Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1923), p. 74.

lation on the basis of changes in school population since 1920, assuming that school population bore the same ratio to total population in 1926 as it had borne in 1920. The formula proposed was this:

$$\frac{\text{School population in 1920}}{\text{Census population in 1920}} = \frac{\text{School population in 1926}}{X, \text{ i.e., total population in 1926.}}$$

To test the validity of this method as applied to rural counties, county figures for population, 1925, as estimated by changes in school population, were compared with state census figures, 1925, for three states, Kansas, Iowa and South Dakota.

The per cent. of error for four-fifths of the 141 rural counties in these three states was less than 10 per cent., that for one-half the counties being under 5 per cent. For one-fifth of the counties the errors were larger and were in a number of cases considerable.

The six counties with high percentages of error in South Dakota were all new counties, and the eight in Kansas had recently experienced considerable changes in population.

When the method was applied to the rural counties of a state treated as a single unit, errors tended to balance one another.

These results seemed to justify the use of changes in school population as a basis in estimating population for 1926, especially for the combined rural counties of states. Population was accordingly estimated by this method for the combined rural counties of fourteen states in the Middle West and Far West, and for four states in the South, these states being all those in these divisions for which accredited figures for school population were available for both 1920 and 1926. Either population figures estimated in this way or state census figures were obtained for eighteen states in the Middle West and Far West and for five states in the South.

On these figures for population in 1926 were based tentative ratios of church-membership to population for the combined rural counties of the twenty-three states covered, which were utilized in selecting the areas for study but not in the book.

In the late fall of 1930 pamphlets giving 1930 population figures for counties, etc., were made available, a few at a time, by the United States Census. This made it possible to estimate population for 1926 by averaging the census figures for 1920 and 1930. By this method population was estimated for the combined rural counties of each of thirty-eight states. Ratios based on these figures are given in Table III, and were used in preparing Diagram III.

When ratios based on population estimated in this way were compared with ratios in the calculating of which population

figures were estimated according to changes in school population, a close agreement was observed in almost every single instance. For Ohio, for example, the ratios obtained by using population estimated in the two ways were 39 per cent. and 38.9 per cent., which differ by only one-tenth of a point. In only two cases was the difference as much as five points, and in only four cases was it as much as two points. For half the states the difference was less than one point, and for one-third the states it was less than half a point.

Ratios for separate counties were prepared for all rural counties except the few close to large cities in the eighteen states in the Middle West and Far West for which school population figures were available.

Ratios for 1916 and for 1906 were prepared for the 416 counties that had been organized by 1899 and that had not experienced any change of boundaries since that date. The requisite estimates of population for 1916 and 1906 were made by averaging county populations from the census preceding and the census following the date of the religious census from which the corresponding church-membership figure was taken. The ratios by states and divisions, are presented in Table V.

In the counties surveyed, the population of each center and minor civil division was estimated as accurately as possible and ratios were calculated for each center and minor civil division, for centers of different sizes taken as groups, and for the open country as a single unit.

THE FIELD

The field covered by the statistics designed to discover poorly enlisted territory was delimited as follows:

Since it had been learned through earlier studies of the Institute that enlistment was lower in rural areas than in towns and cities, the investigation was limited to counties which in the Census of 1920 were classified as rural counties, the word *rural* denoting territory having no center with as many as 2,500 inhabitants. Rural counties were taken as representative of rural territory in general. In the area covered, all rural counties were included in the investigation except a few near large cities that were classified by the Census as including either "metropolitan area" or "area adjacent to metropolitan." In the states for which ratios were prepared for separate counties, the counties excluded numbered only eleven.

New England and the Middle Atlantic states were excluded, because for two of the New England states rural counties were not identified by the Census, and in the other seven states they were present only in limited numbers and in some cases had exceptional characteristics. Delaware had no rural counties.

The field for which ratios were prepared for the combined rural counties of each state, therefore, included the entire United States with the exception of ten small states in the northeastern corner. It comprised thirty-eight states, covered 94.5 per cent. of the area of the United States, and contained 86.1 per cent. of the rural population.

The field in which ratios for counties were calculated was further limited as follows:

The southern states were excluded because the church situation in the South was quite different from that elsewhere in the United States; because only one southern state had taken a census in 1925; and because accredited school population figures for both 1920 and 1926 were available for only four additional southern states.

Missouri, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico and California were also excluded because they had not published county figures for school population for one or both of the dates for which it was required.

The remaining territory, actually covered by the investigation of county ratios, consisted of 558 counties in eighteen contiguous states in the Middle West and Far West, which are shaded on the map presented as Diagram II. These states cover three-fifths of the area of the United States; and in 1920 contained about one-third of the rural population. The territory covered contained 16,677 churches and had a total church-membership of 2,130,480.

Appendix II

STATISTICAL FINDINGS: RATIO OF CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP TO POPULATION

The total church-membership of the United States, based upon the *Census of Religious Bodies: 1926*, was 47.8 per cent. of the population of the country in that year, estimated as half way between the census figures for 1920 and 1930.

IN RURAL COUNTIES AS COMPARED WITH COUNTIES CONTAINING TOWNS OR CITIES

The presupposition that ratios of church-membership to population were lower for rural counties than for counties containing towns and cities was verified by calculating ratios for the combined counties containing towns and cities for the same twenty-three states for which ratios for combined rural counties had originally been prepared. The ratios for territory composed of rural counties, and for territory composed of counties containing towns or cities, by divisions, were as follows:

TABLE I—RATIO OF CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP TO POPULATION, 1926, FOR RURAL COUNTIES AND FOR COUNTIES CONTAINING TOWNS OR CITIES, IN TWENTY-THREE STATES GROUPED BY DIVISIONS

REGION	NUMBER OF STATES CON- SIDERED	RURAL COUNTIES			COUNTIES CONTAINING TOWNS OR CITIES		
		NUMBER Total	NUMBER Con- sidered	Ratio of Church- member- ship to Population	NUMBER Total	NUMBER Con- sidered	Ratio of Church- member- ship to Population
Total.....	23	882	868	42.2	880	880	44.2
East North Central Division.....	5	110	106	42.3	326	326	45.0
West North Central Division.....	6	291	288	44.0	213	213	44.6
Three Southern Divisions.....	5	312	309	44.7	226	226	47.1
Mountain Division...	5	135	131	31.5	74	74	38.0
Pacific Division.....	2	34	34	18.5	41	41	26.5

As the table shows, the ratios of church-membership to population for rural counties fell furthest below the ratios for counties containing towns or cities in the Pacific Northwest; and the area with the next highest amount of discrepancy consisted of the five states covered in the Mountain Division.

Ratios for the combined rural counties of the individual states covered were lower than ratios for the combined counties containing towns or cities of the same states for fourteen of the eighteen states covered by the inquiry. Ratios for rural counties were somewhat the higher for Illinois, Minnesota, Nebraska and Montana. The difference was greatest for Minnesota, for which the ratio for rural counties was 52.4 per cent., and that for counties containing towns or cities was 47.3 per cent.

The general ratio for all the rural counties in the twenty-three states of the table was 42.2 per cent. For thirty-eight states, using as estimates of population, averages of 1920 and 1930 census figures, the general ratio was 39.9 per cent. Certain of the additional states among the thirty-eight had populous rural counties with low proportions of church-members.

VARIATION WITH SIZE OF CENTER

In each of the fifteen districts surveyed,¹ the proportions of the people in the church-membership were calculated separately for groups of centers of various sizes and for the open country. The percentages thus obtained are set forth in the following table:

¹ Fourteen of the districts surveyed were counties. The fifteenth consisted of four small contiguous counties.

TABLE II—PROPORTION OF POPULATION IN THE RESIDENT CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP FOR CENTERS OF DIFFERENT SIZES AND FOR THE OPEN COUNTRY, FOR FIFTEEN DISTRICTS SURVEYED

		PROPORTION OF POPULATION IN CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP VILLAGES HAVING POPULATION*						
KIND OF TERRITORY AND COUNTY	COUNTY		Towns or Small Cities	All Villages 250 to 2,500	500 to 2,500	250 to 500	Ham- lets Under 250	Open Coun- try
Old Hilly Areas								
Lamoille County, Vermont	19.7	....	24.8	....	....	19.4	16.7	
Orange County, Vermont.	18.2	....	25.1	....	....	23.2	13.8	
Windham County, Vermont	33.6	51.5	18.8	....	....	23.4	12.4	
Old Level Areas								
Fayette County, Ohio....	25.0	36.6	....	29.8	19.2	17.7	16.6	
Madison County, Ohio...	25.7	38.0	....	34.7	25.8	23.1	18.1	
Pickaway County, Ohio..	24.8	36.2	....	35.6	21.7	21.6	17.9	
Grazing Country								
A,† New Mexico.....	25.2	....	....	25.6	....	46.7	20.9	
B, Wyoming.....	13.1	....	....	21.5	....	6.6	6.4	
Mountain Sections								
C, California.....	14.1	....	....	21.7	13.9	10.9	10.2	
D, Montana.....	6.9	....	9.6	....	....	18.5	4.7	
Cut-over Districts								
4 small counties, Michigan	12.3	....	....	16.4	24.2	11.8	9.5	
Aitkin County, Minnesota	13.6	....	....	29.0	....	12.8	10.8	
E, Washington.....	12.5	15.0	....	11.2	9.2	6.2	5.8	
Dry-farming Regions								
F, New Mexico.....	29.8	36.2	....	....	40.1	28.1	19.8	
G, Montana.....	17.1	....	....	22.6	....	27.5	16.0	

* Villages were divided according to size only when villages with populations under and over 500 were both present, and when there was a marked difference in size between the villages in the two groups.

† The names of most of the counties surveyed in the new areas are not given because the number of centers, churches, ministers, etc., are so small that the application of unfavorable findings could easily be traced.

BY STATES AND REGIONS

Ratios of church-membership to population for the combined rural counties of thirty-eight states are given in Table III.

The ranges of these ratios are presented graphically in the map that constitutes Diagram III. Attention is called to the following generalizations:

1. The rural territory having fewest church-members was for the most part in the Far West.

2. As between the five states of the Mountain Division having low ratios and the three Pacific states, the Pacific states had the lower ratios.

3. Seven contiguous lowland southern states and eight contiguous states in the East North Central and West North Central divisions had ratios over 40 per cent.; and another middle-western state, Ohio, had a ratio nearly as high, namely, 39 per cent.

4. The middle-western state having the lowest ratio was Michigan, half the area of which consisted of Cut-over land.

TABLE III—RATIO OF CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP TO POPULATION, 1926, FOR THE RURAL COUNTIES OF THIRTY-EIGHT STATES, BY DIVISIONS AND STATES

	NUMBER OF RURAL COUNTIES, 1920		ESTIMATED POPULATION 1926	CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP 1926	RATIO OF CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP TO POPULATION* %
	Total	Con-sidered			
Total.....	1,485	1,453	17,512,104	6,987,407	39.9
East North Central....	110	106	1,377,789	563,970	40.9
West North Central....	357	353	3,740,882	1,579,104	42.2
South Atlantic.....	309	297	4,202,390	1,861,243	44.3
East South Central....	226	222	3,713,793	1,487,565	40.1
West South Central....	258	254	3,041,610	1,054,677	34.7
Mountain.....	173	169	1,036,080	366,687	35.4
Pacific.....	52	52	399,560	74,161	18.6
East North Central					
Ohio.....	15	14	243,753	95,154	39.0
Indiana.....	22	20	237,347	100,198	42.8
Illinois.....	26	26	349,818	152,840	43.7
Michigan.....	27	27	252,721	84,874	33.6
Wisconsin.....	20	19	294,150	130,904	44.5
West North Central					
Minnesota.....	40	40	553,656	290,765	52.5
Iowa.....	31	31	471,892	208,045	44.1
Missouri.....	66	65	844,882	306,842	36.3
North Dakota.....	41	41	386,684	171,326	44.3
South Dakota.....	54	52	416,550	170,945	41.0
Nebraska.....	66	65	562,525	229,415	40.8
Kansas.....	59	59	517,466	201,766	39.0
South Atlantic					
Maryland.....	9	7	117,287	52,231	44.5
Virginia.....	71	66	881,668	442,858	50.2
West Virginia.....	29	28	479,950	143,310	29.9
North Carolina.....	54	53	955,186	440,806	46.2
South Carolina.....	17	17	401,586	194,722	48.5
Georgia.....	100	97	1,068,691	477,763	44.7
Florida.....	29	29	298,022	109,553	36.8
East South Central					
Kentucky.....	78	75	1,012,751	343,277	33.9
Tennessee.....	56	56	740,221	285,771	38.6
Alabama.....	39	39	959,168	453,002	47.2
Mississippi.....	53	52	1,001,653	406,515	40.6
West South Central					
Arkansas.....	38	37	606,932	182,883	30.1
Louisiana.....	34	32	534,829	231,862	43.4
Oklahoma.....	29	29	508,629	108,060	21.2
Texas.....	157	156	1,391,220	531,872	38.2
Mountain					
Montana.....	35	35	215,114	49,946	23.2
Idaho.....	26	26	129,056	38,158	29.6
Wyoming.....	13	13	91,796	21,591	23.5
Colorado.....	41	39	197,945	47,714	24.1
New Mexico.....	18	18	180,504	94,164	52.2
Arizona.....	4	4	50,262	19,410	38.6
Utah.....	20	18	110,063	82,171	74.7
Nevada.....	16	16	61,340	13,533	22.1
Pacific					
Washington.....	18	18	162,724	33,341	20.5
Oregon.....	16	16	123,076	21,327	17.3
California.....	18	18	113,760	19,493	17.1

* The population figures were estimated by averaging Census figures for 1920 and 1930. The totals and the ratios are therefore somewhat different in some cases from the corresponding items in Table I, for which population figures were estimated on the basis of changes in school population since 1920.

5. West Virginia, all of which falls within the Southern Appalachian Highlands, and Kentucky and Tennessee, much of the area of which belongs to the same region, together with Arkansas and Missouri, considerable territory of which is occupied by the Ozark and Ouachita Highlands, all had lower ratios than the states surrounding them, which had comparatively little or no territory of a hilly topography, except Oklahoma, which had been very recently settled.

6. Ratios of 50 per cent. or over distinguished the rural counties, taken by states, of Utah, New Mexico, Minnesota and Virginia; Utah being more than twenty points in the lead of any of the other states, with a ratio of 74.7 per cent.

VARIATION AMONG COUNTIES

Ratios for rural counties taken individually, which were calculated for 558 rural counties in eighteen states of the Middle West and Far West, showed wide variation, ranging indeed from 2.7 per cent. to 95.1 per cent. Great divergence occurred even among the ratios of the counties in the same state. A range of fifty points or more between the highest and the lowest county ratios was observable for ten of the eighteen states. The smallest ranges of ratios, which were all above twenty-five points, appeared in three far-western states, where all the rural counties had ratios below 35 per cent.

COUNTIES WITH HIGH RATIOS

Ratios of 45 per cent., close to or above the national average of 47.8 per cent., were exhibited by fewer than three-tenths of the counties, which had one-fifth the combined area, and about three-eighths of the population. Exceptionally high ratios, rising above 75 per cent., were shown by only fifteen counties, which covered one-twentieth of the area and contained one-fortieth of the population.

On the other hand, more than seven-tenths of the counties had ratios lower than the national average. These counties covered nearly four-fifths of the area of the counties considered, and contained more than five-eighths of their population.

COUNTIES WITH RATIOS BELOW 20 PER CENT

Among these counties below the national average in respect to proportion of church-members, 105, more than a fourth, had ratios lower than 20 per cent., well under half the national average. These counties occupied three-tenths, 30.2 per cent., of the area, and contained somewhat more than one-tenth, 10.6 per cent., of the people. In fact, their combined area was nearly half again as large as the area of the counties having ratios above the national average, and their population was over 560,000.

County ratios under 20 per cent. were much the commonest in the Far West. In Washington and Oregon, twenty-five of the thirty-four rural counties had ratios of this low range; and these counties contained more than three-fourths, 77.8 per cent., of the area and three-fifths, 61.4 per cent., of the population of the rural counties in these two states. And in the five states of the Mountain Division that were considered, ratios below 20 per cent. prevailed in forty-nine of the 130 rural counties, containing three-eighths, 37.5 per cent., of the area and three-tenths, 30.3 per cent., of the people.

Furthermore, of the 105 counties with ratios under 20 per cent. in the whole area covered, seventy-four were in the two far-western divisions; twenty-two were in the western parts of South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas; and six were near the Great Lakes. Only three were in any other part of the country.

A similar distribution held for the counties with ratios between 20 and 25 per cent. Of the forty-seven such counties, twenty-nine were in the two far-western divisions, seven were in the western parts of South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas, and nine were in Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota, near the Great Lakes. Only two were in other parts of the United States.²

VARIATION WITH DENSITY OF POPULATION

An inquiry was undertaken to determine whether the ratio of church-membership to population varied with the number of inhabitants per square mile. It was desired that the field of the inquiry should have the following qualifications:

1. A large preponderance of rural counties.
2. Reliable population figures for 1926.
3. Variation in density, so that sufficiently large groups of counties of different ranges of density would be included.
4. Except as to density, approximately uniform environmental conditions. (Similarity could not be absolute, or density would tend to be uniform.)

The area first selected consisted of the rural counties of the states of North and South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas. Here a large proportion of the counties were rural; North Dakota, South Dakota and Kansas each took a state census in 1925; the population was denser towards the east and less dense towards the west; and there was more uniformity in topography than in most other parts of the United States, these states consisting of high plains gradually rising towards the west.

Since these states proved to afford but small numbers of counties with densities falling within the census ranges of less

² Of the five counties with ratios under 25 per cent. that were outside the specified geographical regions, one was not far east of the semi-arid line; three were marginal, one being sandy and two hilly and unglaciated; and the fifth was near a large city.

than two persons per square mile and of eighteen to forty-five persons per mile, the rural counties of Iowa and of the level eastern part of Wyoming were added. Iowa had taken a state census in 1925. (Wyoming had done the same, but in publishing the results did not claim for them a high degree of accuracy.) Conditions in these states, especially with respect to elevation and rainfall, differ from those of the other four states, yet all six states are similar in many respects, including a comparatively level surface and an almost purely agricultural economy.

Table IV shows that as density increased the ratios became progressively higher.

TABLE IV—RATIO OF CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP TO POPULATION IN RELATION TO DENSITY OF POPULATION, FOR THE 257 RURAL COUNTIES IN IOWA, NORTH DAKOTA, SOUTH DAKOTA, NEBRASKA, KANSAS AND EASTERN WYOMING

Range of Density	Number of Counties	Area	Population 1926*	Average Density	Number of Church-members, 1926	Ratio of Church-membership to Population
Total.....	261	284,467	2,432,396	.....	1,008,928	....
Less than 2....	15	55,788	77,983	1.40	20,234	25.9
2 to 6.....	71	92,168	328,162	3.56	107,528	32.8
6 to 18.....	103	96,211	1,008,374	10.48	420,815	41.7
18 to 45.....	72	40,300	1,017,877	25.26	460,351	45.2

* For Iowa, North and South Dakota, and Kansas the population figures were taken from 1925 state censuses. For Nebraska and eastern Wyoming they were estimated on the basis of changes in school population since 1920.

Not all counties with sparse population, however, had low proportions of church-members. On the contrary, the five counties with ratios of 75 per cent. to 80 per cent. had an average density of only 2.9 inhabitants per square mile; and the ten counties with ratios of 80 per cent. and over had an average density of only 3.7 persons.

Variation of the proportion of the people in the churches according to density of population was also found in the course of the field surveys. Within each of the ten counties surveyed the open-country districts of which showed considerable variation in density, the districts with more inhabitants per square mile had the higher proportions of church-members.

VARIATION WITH KIND OF TERRITORY

The ratios of church-membership to population for large samples of four kinds of new territory, distributed in from one to four regions of each type, ten regions in all, were as follows:

	PER CENT.
Great Lakes Cut-over region.....	29.6
Dry-farming regions.....	.....
I. Columbia Basin.....	21.3
II. Semi-arid part of Spring Wheat belt.....	39.2
III. Semi-arid part of Winter Wheat region.....	26.3

	PER CENT
Grazing country	
I. Northern Great Plains.....	25.6
II. Northern Intermountain Plateaus.....	15.1
III. Central Intermountain Plateaus (including Utah)	55.0
IV. Western Texas (having many Spanish-American Roman Catholics).....	52.5
Mountain sections	
I. Central Rockies.....	22.6
II. Southern Rockies.....	23.5

It will be observed that of these ten regions representing the four kinds of new territory, seven had ratios below 30 per cent. and four had ratios below 25 per cent. Of the three regions with highest ratios, one included Mormon Utah, and another, lying close to the Mexican border, contained many Spanish-American Roman Catholics.

COUNTIES WITH LOW RATIOS

Among the 214 individual counties of the four kinds of new territory, a comparatively high proportion had low ratios. Seventy counties, just about one-third, had ratios under 20 per cent. In contrast to this, only seven of the 106 rural counties in the East North Central States had ratios below 20 per cent., and four of the seven were in the Great Lakes Cut-over region. Counties having ratios under 20 per cent. occupied two-fifths of the area, 40.2 per cent.; while in the East North Central Division, they occupied only about one-fourteenth of the area, 7.1 per cent.; and in the West North Central Division, one-ninth, 11.4 per cent. The poorly enlisted counties of the four kinds of territory, moreover, contained over one-fourth of the population, while in the two divisions of the Middle West they contained only about one-thirty-third of the inhabitants.

The proportion of counties having ratios under 20 per cent. varied with the kind of territory. Ratios below this level characterized all but five of the counties in the two Protestant Grazing regions, and more than half the Mountain counties. To such counties belonged half the area and at least half the population both of the Mountain sections and also of the Grazing country, even including Utah and western Texas. In contrast, only one-fifth of the Dry-farming counties and less than one-sixth of the Great Lakes Cut-over counties had ratios as low as 20 per cent.

COUNTIES WITH RATIOS OF 45 PER CENT. OR OVER

Conversely, a comparatively low proportion of the counties of the four kinds of territory had ratios of or above 45 per cent., approximately the national average. This level was reached by only thirty-two of the 214 counties, that is, by only one in seven. And these counties with higher ratios contained only one-sixth of the area and population of the sample counties of the four

kinds of new area taken together. In the East North Central Division, on the other hand, more than a quarter of the rural counties, 31.1 per cent., had ratios above 45 per cent.; and such counties occupied more than one-fourth of the area and contained more than one-third of the population. In the West North Central Division, moreover, counties with ratios of 45 per cent. or over included nearly one-third of the area and 45 per cent. of the inhabitants.

Of counties having ratios of 45 per cent. or over, the areas predominantly Protestant in the Grazing regions had none; the Great Lakes Cut-over region had one; and the two Mountain regions had one between them. On the other hand, the Dry lands had twelve, all in the Spring and Winter Wheat belts; and two of the Grazing regions, one containing many Mormons and the other many Roman Catholics, had seventeen.

VARIATION WITH AGE OF AREA

The older among the younger states, and the older among the ten regions of the new kinds of territory, had the lower ratios. The three states on the Pacific coast all had lower ratios for rural counties than any of the states of the Mountain Division, which were developed later. The two Mountain regions and the predominantly Protestant Grazing regions had lower ratios than the more recently developed Great Lakes Cut-over region and the two younger Dry-farming regions.

Moreover, when the Dry-farming country, the latest in origin of the four kinds of new territory, was considered by itself, the ratios of its three regions were found to vary with recency of development as follows:

Spring Wheat region, for the most part of recent development: ratio, 39.2 per cent.

Winter Wheat region, older but with renewed or continued development: ratio, 26.3 per cent.

Columbia Basin, older and without recent influx of settlers: ratio, 21.3 per cent.

VARIATION WITH PREDOMINANCE OF CERTAIN FAITHS

Even more than with kind of territory, ratios of church-membership to population varied with the predominance of certain faiths.

FOR THE STATES WITH HIGHEST RATIOS

Among the thirty-eight states covered, Utah, it will be remembered, had the highest ratio. Of the church-members of the state of Utah, 91.2 per cent. were Mormons. Indeed, in the rural Grazing counties of the state, Mormons constituted 97 per cent. of the church-membership. As for Minnesota, the state with the next highest ratio, 71.4 per cent. of the church-members were

either Lutherans or Roman Catholics. In New Mexico, which ranked close to Minnesota, 80.8 per cent. of the church-members were Roman Catholics, largely of Spanish-American stock. On the other hand, Virginia, the next state in order of ratios, did not have large representations of any of these three faiths; but Baptists and Methodists of various bodies, white and colored, constituted 69.2 per cent. of the church-membership.

FOR THE COUNTIES WITH HIGHEST RATIOS

Of the fifteen counties with highest ratios in the whole area covered, the ratios all being 75 per cent. or over, eleven were in Utah. Another had many Roman Catholics of Mexican descent. Two more contained large numbers both of Roman Catholics and of Lutherans. But one of the fifteen counties was without a preponderance of one or two of these faiths.

Moreover, among the twenty-seven counties with ratios between 60 and 75 per cent., two had large numbers of Mormons, and fifteen had considerable elements both of Roman Catholics and of Lutherans. In seven cases, the membership of the preponderating faith or faiths composed over 90 per cent. of the total church-membership. But in ten counties of this group, these faiths were not so predominant.

FOR THE COUNTIES OF VERMONT, AS BETWEEN 1906 AND 1926

Again, in the counties of Vermont, the ratios of church-membership to population rose or fell between 1906 and 1926 in almost invariable accordance with the proportion of Roman Catholics in the population. The two percentages both rose for eight counties; and they both fell for five counties. For only one county, and that the smallest, were the tendencies opposite.

These facts support three inferences. First, in most of the counties having very high ratios, there was a predominance of Mormons, Roman Catholics or Lutherans, or of two of these elements combined. Secondly, where one or more of these groups were very strong, high ratios prevailed even in very sparsely settled country. Thirdly, high ratios were sometimes, though not often, found where representatives of these three faiths did not predominate.

TRENDS OF RATIOS, 1906 TO 1926

To discover whether church-members had become more or less numerous in proportion to population in the different states and kinds of territory, ratios of church-membership were calculated for 1906, 1916 and 1926 for the 416 rural counties, within the area covered, that had not experienced a change of boundaries since 1900. The condition was met by almost all the rural counties of the Middle West, but by a much smaller proportion of those in the newer lands. Such ratios were calculated for states

and divisions; for kinds of territory and for the separate regions of each; and also for the individual counties.

The ratios at the three dates for states and divisions are presented in the following table:

TABLE V—RATIO OF CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP TO POPULATION, 1926, 1916 AND 1906, FOR 416 RURAL COUNTIES THAT HAD NOT EXPERIENCED ANY CHANGE OF BOUNDARIES SINCE 1899, BY DIVISIONS AND STATES

DIVISION AND STATE	NUMBER OF COUNTIES		RATIO OF CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP TO POPULATION		
	Total	Considered	1926	1916	1906
Total.....	570	416	42.1	36.9	33.2
East North Central.....	110	104	41.8	38.4	33.6
West North Central					
6 states of 7.....	291	243	44.2	37.0	34.1
Mountain					
5 states of 8.....	135	46	38.4	38.5	29.5
Pacific					
2 states of 3.....	34	23	18.3	18.0	14.9
East North Central.....					
Ohio.....	15	14	38.7	39.7	34.7
Indiana.....	22	20	43.3	39.5	33.3
Illinois.....	26	26	45.6	41.4	35.4
Michigan.....	27	27	33.4	28.2	24.7
Wisconsin.....	20	17	46.3	42.8	40.2
West North Central					
Minnesota.....	40	36	52.1	41.7	44.2
Iowa.....	31	31	44.5	39.4	34.7
North Dakota.....	41	24	47.0	35.1	35.3
South Dakota.....	54	35	41.0	33.9	33.1
Nebraska.....	66	58	42.1	34.8	29.7
Kansas.....	59	59	38.9	34.9	28.4
Mountain					
Montana.....	35	4	24.4	19.7	21.8
Idaho.....	26	2	14.0	18.1	6.9
Wyoming.....	13	1	17.6	26.5	14.6
Colorado.....	41	27	21.5	20.8	18.7
Utah.....	20	12	67.8	76.7	55.5
Pacific					
Washington.....	18	12	21.2	19.6	18.2
Oregon.....	16	11	14.4	15.9	10.3

For the 416 rural counties covered, considered as a single whole, the ratios rose from 33.2 per cent. in 1906 to 36.9 per cent. in 1916 and to 42.1 per cent. in 1926. Of the counties taken singly, an increase of at least 10 per cent. during the twenty years was experienced by 76 per cent., that is by three-fourths the number. On the whole, therefore, the rural churches were making progress in the task of enlisting the population.

BY DIVISIONS

When, however, the four divisions wholly or partly covered by the inquiry as to trends were considered separately, the trends of the ratios were found to be somewhat different. A steady gain had taken place in the East North Central Division, where the ratios for the three successive periods were 33.6 per cent., 38.4 per cent., and 41.8 per cent., respectively. The gain was experienced by over seven-tenths of the counties, 72.1 per cent. Among the five states of this division, the only one to show decline at either period was Ohio, the ratio for which after rising five points in the earlier decade, fell one point in the later decade, thus showing a loss for the second period of considerably less than 10 per cent.

The rural counties of the six states of the West North Central Division included in the investigation also showed a steady increase in relative church-membership, the ratios being 34.1 per cent., then 37 per cent., and finally, 44.2 per cent. Here the gain was shared by four-fifths of the counties, 80.6 per cent. Though in the earlier decade the ratios of two of the states showed a slight decline, at the end of the second decade the ratio of each of the states was more than one-tenth higher than at the beginning of that decade.

In both the two divisions of the Far West, however, though the trend of the general ratios was upward in the earlier decade, it remained about the same in the later period; during which time, indeed, the ratios declined for four of the seven states covered. For the counties singly, the ratio was lower in 1926 than in 1906 for one-fourth of the counties, a proportion four times as high as in the Middle West.

The rise of ratios in the two middle-western divisions was accompanied by an increase in the proportion of counties having ratios of 45 per cent., or over, and a corresponding decrease in the proportion of counties having ratios under 20 per cent. In the Mountain Division, though the proportion of counties with very low ratios showed a decline, no gain was made in the proportion having ratios over 45 per cent. And in the Pacific Division, not only was there no diminution in the high proportion of counties with ratios under 20 per cent., but not a single county passed into the class having ratios over 45 per cent.

BY KINDS OF TERRITORY

Ratios by types and regions for 1926, 1916 and 1906 are presented in Table VI.

A comparison of tables V and VI will show that the 1906 ratios were decidedly lower for the ten regions of new territory than for the Middle West. All but two of the ten regions had in 1906 ratios of from about one-fourth for the Great Lakes Cut-over region to about one-fourteenth for one of the Grazing

regions. The exceptional regions with ratios higher than one-fourth were the Grazing region containing Utah and the newest Dry-farming region. In contrast, of the eleven states of the Middle West covered, only one had in 1906 a ratio as low as one-fourth, and eight had ratios of one-third or more.

TABLE VI—RATIO OF CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP TO POPULATION, 1926, 1916 AND 1906, FOR 126 COUNTIES OF FOUR TYPES, BY REGIONS

TYPE AND REGION	NUMBER OF COUNTIES		RATIO OF CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP TO POPULATION		
	Total	Considered	1926	1916	1906
Total.....	214	126	33.2	28.8	25.1
Cut-over					
I.....	33	30	29.9	25.3	25.8
Dry-farming.....	82	48	33.5	26.7	24.3
I.....	12	7	26.1	23.5	21.7
II.....	37	12	47.2	34.0	32.0
III.....	32	29	26.9	22.0	17.9
Grazing.....	55	29	44.3	44.9	27.1
I.....	14	4	16.0	18.1	12.3
II.....	12	6	12.1	13.2	7.1
III.....	16	11	64.4	67.2	49.6
IV.....	13	8	58.5	60.3	15.9
Mountain.....	44	19	26.7	25.0	23.2
I.....	24	5	26.6	19.3	21.5
II.....	20	14	26.7	27.2	23.7

From these low initial levels, the ratios rose between 1906 and 1916 for all but two of the regions of new territory. During the second decade, however, the ratios of five of the ten regions fell, instead of continuing to rise as was the case for ten of the eleven states of the Middle West. The regions with declining ratios consisted of all four of the Grazing regions and one of the Mountain regions; all of them, therefore, being among the regions of new territory longest settled.

The region showing the greatest rise in ratio during the second decade was the youngest Dry-farming region.

Finally, in the four kinds of new territory there was a larger proportion than in the Middle West of individual counties with ratios lower by at least one-tenth in 1926 than in 1906. In the four kinds of territory, the ratio of one county in five fell one-tenth or more; in the Middle West, the ratio of only one county in twelve fell as much as one-tenth.

Appendix III

DELIMITATION AND INVESTIGATION OF TERRITORY OF SIX KINDS HAVING FEW CHURCH-MEMBERS IN PROPORTION TO POPULATION

Information regarding the six kinds of territory covered in the present study was obtained from the following sources:

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Contour map of the United States, issued by the United States Geological Survey, 1916; reprinted in 1929.

Map of the United States showing average annual precipitation, 1895-1914, published by the United States Weather Bureau as part of the *Atlas of American Agriculture*, reproduced as Diagram V.

Isaiah Bowman, *Forest Physiography* (New York; John Wiley and Sons, 1911).

O. E. Baker, Senior Economist, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the following articles:

"Agricultural Maps," *Yearbook of Agriculture*, 1928, p. 459 ff.

"Agricultural Regions of North America," *Economic Geography*, volume II, p. 640 ff.

"Spring Wheat Region," *Economic Geography*, Vol. IV, p. 399 ff.

"Agriculture of the Great Plains Region," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. XIII, p. 109 ff.

L. C. Gray and others, "Utilization of Our Lands for Crops, Pasture and Forest," *Yearbook of Agriculture*, 1923, p. 415 ff.

J. Russell Smith, *North America* (New York; Harcourt, 1925).

Various publications of state departments and agricultural experiment stations.

Market Data Handbook of United States, United States Department of Commerce, 1929.

Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, especially the volumes relating to population, agriculture and irrigation; and the *Census of Agriculture: 1925*. (The indications afforded by the Census were especially helpful because they made it possible to select counties that were comparable from a national point of view, whereas the classifications made by state authorities were naturally affected by the particular conditions in each state.)

Interviews with officials of departments of agricultural extension in the states visited; state and national forestry officials; state geologists and geographers, officials of departments of con-

servation and others; denominational superintendents; and other persons widely conversant with sectional conditions.

DELIMITATION OF KINDS OF TERRITORY

A general knowledge of the location of the different kinds of area was afforded by the publications of four of the authorities, Professor Bowman, Dr. Baker, Dr. Gray, and Professor Smith, in combination with the maps. To list the counties belonging to each kind of territory required more detailed information.

CUT-OVER DISTRICTS

The Cut-over counties were identified largely through information from officials of departments of forestry, conservation and agricultural extension. The boundaries sketched in the light of interviews were checked by census data regarding such points as size of farm, per cent. of area in farms, agricultural productions, and woodland cleared for crops, 1920-1924.

MOUNTAIN SECTIONS

In listing Mountain counties, the contour map of the United States was largely utilized, in conjunction with state maps showing county boundaries. Counties containing wide irrigated tracts were eliminated, since such districts with their small farms and dense populations were characterized by economic and social conditions unlike those prevailing in average Mountain counties, where irrigation, though frequently present, was applied only to small patches and narrow bands. The counties with wide irrigated districts were identified partly through the maps and statistics of the Census of Irrigation and partly by the presence among the crops reported by the *Census of Agriculture* of large amounts of such crops as sugar beets, alfalfa, vegetables and fruits, all of which, in the arid and semi-arid regions, are raised only with the aid of irrigation. The identification of Mountain counties was checked by the study of such items from the Census as number of farms, per cent. of area in farms, and value of stock and of crops.

GRAZING AND DRY-FARMING TERRITORY

Wide areas containing Grazing and Dry-farming territory interspersed with scattered irrigated districts, were indicated by the works of reference and their maps. In this vast region were many counties exhibiting the following contrasted situations:

1. Counties where Grazing predominated.
2. Counties where Dry-farming predominated.
3. Counties where these two types of agriculture were combined.
4. Counties wholly or partly occupied by deserts.
5. Counties affected by the neighborhood of cities.
6. Counties containing wide irrigated districts.

The counties affected by the presence of wide irrigated districts were identified by the same methods as in the case of Mountain sections. Those containing deserts or affected by the neighborhood of cities were distinguished partly through maps and descriptive works and partly through their agricultural productions. Territory of these three kinds being thus eliminated, the classification of counties as Grazing country, Dry-farming territory, or a combination of Grazing and Dry-farming districts, was accomplished through the data afforded by the map of average annual precipitation, the testimony of authorities interviewed, and the works of reference. Among the reference sources, especial importance was given to data from the Census, particularly from the *Census of Agriculture*.

Grazing Country

To identify counties belonging to Grazing country, the following criteria were adopted:

1. An average annual precipitation of less than twenty inches in the South and of less than sixteen inches in the North.
2. Total value of live stock large in comparison to total value of crops.
3. Crops largely confined to forage crops.
4. Large amounts of pasture, afforded either through high average size of farms or through a low percentage of land in farms.
5. Low average value of farm land per acre.

Dry-farming Area

The criteria applied to Dry-farming counties were as follows:

1. Average annual precipitation (1) less than eighteen inches; and (2) greater than twelve inches except in the Columbia Basin, where dry farming is conducted with as low an average annual precipitation as ten or even eight and a half inches.
2. A general elevation of less than 5,000 feet.
3. Value of stock less than value of crops.
4. Crops such as are usually raised under dry-farming conditions, i.e., wheat, oats, flax, beans, sorghum, etc.
5. Average value of farm land higher than in neighboring Grazing counties.

Counties where both stock and crops were produced under semi-arid conditions without a decided preponderance of either were classified as "Grazing and Dry-farming" territory.

OLD AREAS BOTH LEVEL AND HILLY

The identification of level areas and of hilly sections in the older parts of the United States was easily accomplished with the aid of contour maps and descriptive works. To ascertain what sections of these areas contained country districts with

relatively few church-members was a difficult matter, since the poorly enlisted districts, not being as a rule of county extent, could not be identified through ratios of county church-membership to county population. For this reason the approximate delimitation of old areas both hilly and level where poorly enlisted districts are present was indicated in the text of the book.

REGIONS REPRESENTING THE VARIOUS TYPES

The counties where the different types of new territory predominated were almost all found in recognized regions of the United States. The regions in which the counties of each type are situated are named in the left-hand column of Table VII, which presents the number of counties representing each type in the various regions, rural counties and counties containing towns or cities being enumerated separately.

TABLE VII—DISTRIBUTION OF COUNTIES REPRESENTING FOUR TYPES OF NEW TERRITORY BY REGIONS AND STATES, AND BETWEEN RURAL COUNTIES AND COUNTIES CONTAINING TOWNS OR CITIES

TYPE AND REGION	STATE	NUMBER OF COUNTIES		RURAL COUNTIES	
		Total	Counties Containing Towns or Cities	Total	In Sample
Total.....		461	133	328	214
Cut-over.....		100	54	46	33
I. Great Lakes.....		67	34	33	33
	Michigan.....	38	17	21	21
	Minnesota.....	12	7	5	5
	Wisconsin.....	17	10	7	7
II. Pacific Northwest.....		33	20	13	0
	Idaho.....	4	2	2	0
	Washington....	18	12	6	0
	California.....	3	2	1	0
	Oregon.....	8	4	4	0
Dry-farming.....		111	26	85	82
I. Columbia Basin.....		20	8	12	12
	Washington....	13	4	9	9
	Oregon.....	4	2	2	2
	Idaho.....	3	2	1	1
II. Semi-arid part of Spring Wheat Region.....		47	9	38	38
	Montana.....	16	2	14	14
	North Dakota..	24	5	19	19
	South Dakota..	7	2	5	5

TYPE AND REGION	STATE	NUMBER OF COUNTIES		RURAL COUNTIES	
		Total	Counties Contain- ing Towns or Cities	Total	In Sample
III. Semi-arid part of Winter Wheat Region.....		42	8	34	32
	Colorado.....	12	3	9	9
	Kansas.....	12	1	11	11
	Nebraska.....	10	1	9	9
	Texas.....	4	1	3	3
	New Mexico....	3	2	1	0
	Oklahoma.....	1	0	1	0
Isolated.....	Idaho.....	2	1	1	0
Grazing Country.....		110	24	86	55
I. Northern Great Plains.....		22	6	16	14
	Wyoming.....	12	5	7	6
	Montana.....	2	0	2	2
	South Dakota..	4	1	3	3
	Nebraska.....	3	0	3	3
	Kansas.....	1	0	1	0
II. Northern Intermountain Plateaus.....		15	3	12	12
	Oregon.....	9	3	6	6
	Idaho.....	6	0	6	6
III. Central Intermountain Plateaus.....		27	2	25	16
	Nevada.....	10	1	9	0
	Colorado.....	4	0	4	4
	Utah.....	13	1	12	12
IV. Southern Intermountain Plateaus.....		28	12	16	0
	New Mexico....	18	4	14	0
	Arizona.....	10	8	2	0
V. Western Texas.....		18	1	17	13
	Texas.....	18	1	17	13
Mountain Sections.....		79	19	60	44
I. Central Rockies.....		35	11	24	24
	Idaho.....	6	1	5	5
	Montana.....	21	10	11	11
	Washington....	3	0	3	3
	Wyoming.....	5	0	5	5
II. Southern Rockies.....		27	5	22	20
	Colorado.....	22	4	18	18
	Utah.....	5	1	4	2

TYPE AND REGION	STATE	NUMBER OF COUNTIES		RURAL COUNTIES	
		TOTAL	Counties Contain- ing Towns or Cities	Total	In Sample
III. Sierras.....		17	3	14	0
	California.....	15	3	12	0
	Nevada.....	2	0	2	0
Dry-farming and Grazing.....		60	10	50	0
I. Northern Great Plains.....		50	9	41	0
	Wyoming.....	2	1	1	0
	North Dakota..	5	0	5	0
	South Dakota..	18	1	17	0
	Nebraska.....	8	2	6	0
	Kansas.....	3	0	3	0
	Montana.....	14	5	9	0
II. Northern Intermountain					
Plateaus.....		4	0	4	0
	Oregon.....	3	0	3	0
	Idaho.....	1	0	1	0
III. Central Intermountain					
Plateaus.....		1	0	1	0
	Colorado.....	1	0	1	0
IV. Southern Intermountain					
Plateaus.....		3	0	3	0
	New Mexico...	3	0	3	0
V. Western Texas.....		2	1	1	0
	Texas.....	2	1	1	0
Mountain and Dry-farming.....		1	0	1	0
	Idaho.....	1	0	1	0

An extensive Cut-over region not included in the table because not covered by the study, is situated in the South.

Old Hilly areas are most extensive in three regions:

1. The Northeastern Highlands.
2. The Southern Appalachian Highlands.
3. The Ozark and Ouachita Highlands.

Only the first of these was covered by the study.

The Old Level areas belong to the broad plains of the Mississippi Valley, especially to the older eastern part of this region.

AREA AND RURAL POPULATION OF TERRITORY OF FOUR TYPES

Figures for the area and rural population of territory of county extent representing each of the four types of new territory and certain combinations of these types are presented in Table VIII.

TABLE VIII—AREA AND RURAL POPULATION OF COUNTIES REPRESENTING FOUR TYPES OF NEW AREA: TOTAL AND IN SAMPLES

TYPE OF NEW AREA	NUMBER OF COUNTIES		AREA IN SQUARE MILES			RURAL POPULATION, 1920		
	Total	In Sample	Total	In Sample	Per Cent. in Sample	Total	In Sample	Per Cent. in Sample
Total.....	461	214	1,092,860	422,560	38.7	3,354,485	1,229,295	36.7
Cut-over.....	100	33	121,774	27,504	22.6	1,165,262	271,786	23.3
Dry-farming...	111	82	167,980	117,579	70.0	807,244	540,180	66.9
Grazing.....	110	55	493,000	177,640	36.0	619,530	213,091	34.4
Mountain.....	79	44	173,052	99,837	57.7	423,399	204,238	48.2
Dry-farming & Grazing.....	60	0	128,515	0	0	327,301	0	0
Dry-farming & Mountain...	1	0	8,539	0	0	11,749	0	0

It will be seen that the counties representing the four kinds of new territory number 461, that their total area is 1,092,860 square miles, and that their combined rural population is 3,354,485. The area thus delimited does not include all the territory of these four types, but only that covering entire counties. Territory of each kind is much more extensive than these figures would indicate.

The Great Lakes Cut-over region, to begin with, does not stop short at the boundaries of the counties enumerated, but includes also part of the next tier of counties to the south in all three of the states containing such area. The extensive Cut-over region in the South, moreover, has been left out of account.

Similarly, all along the transition line between the humid and the semi-arid belts lie parts of counties where dry-farming methods are used in farming.

Again, Grazing, Dry-farming and Mountain territory are found in counties excluded because they consist partly of irrigated districts, deserts, or sections close to large cities.

The 110 counties classified as Grazing country, in particular, do not constitute much more than half of the total area in the United States officially classified as arid and semi-arid pasture. In 1919 this kind of territory occupied 587,000,000 acres,¹ an area which equals 917,188 square miles, thus constituting more than three-tenths of the area of the continental United States, and exceeding in extent by three-fifths the area of the lands from which harvests were reaped, as measured by the same authority.

SELECTION OF SAMPLES

FOR THE KINDS OF NEW TERRITORY

Samples composed of counties belonging to each of the four types of new area were needed so that statistics based on county data from the Census and other sources might bring to light the

¹ "Utilization of Our Lands for Crops, Pasture and Forest," p. 427.

TABLE IX—DATA REGARDING THE ENVIRONMENT OF FOUR KINDS OF NEW TERRITORY HAVING FEW CHURCH-MEMBERS IN PROPORTION TO POPULATION

KIND OF TERRITORY	NUM- BER OF COUN- TIES	AREA IN SQUARE MILES	ESTI- MATED POPULA- TION, 1926	DEN- SITY, 1926	PER CENT. OF FOR- EIGN- BORN WHITE, 1926	NUM- BER OF FARMS, 1925	AVER- AGE SIZE OF FARMS, 1925	PER CENT. OF AREA IN FARMS, 1925	PER CENT. OF FARM TEN- ANTS, 1925	AVERAGE VALUE OF FARM LAND PER ACRE, 1925	AVERAGE IN- COME FROM FARM SALES, 1921-25		PER CENT. OF FARMS ON UNIM- proved Dirt Roads
											Per Acre in Farm Farms	Per Acre in Farm Farms	
Cut-over (Great Lakes Region)....	33	27,504	273,037	9.9	18.5	33,751	117.1	22.5	10.1	\$25.27	\$ 824	\$7.00	43.2 29.0
Dry-farming Regions.....	82	117,579	556,746	4.7	13.8	79,645	571.7	60.5	30.6	18.41	2,858	5.00	5.9 49.9
I. Columbia Basin.....	12	21,245	102,443	4.8	10.4	12,641	536.5	49.9	23.4	24.46	2,798	5.00	.....
II. Semi-arid part of Spring Wheat Region.....	38	59,588	286,339	4.8	19.4	42,192	539.0	59.6	28.2	16.30	3,087	5.75	.....
III. Semi-arid part of Winter Wheat Region.....	32	36,746	167,964	4.6	5.4	24,812	645.4	68.1	38.3	18.84	2,501	3.87	.....
Grazing Country.....	55	177,640	213,004	1.2	8.2	25,446	1,322.3	29.6	15.1	7.93	2,470	1.87	7.0 53.3
I. Northern Great Plains.....	14	33,555	53,050	1.6	7.1	8,371	1,339.4	52.2	12.2	6.35	1,720	1.00	.....
II. Northern Intermountain Pla- teaus.....	12	55,647	48,309	0.9	8.5	6,135	730.8	12.6	16.0	14.52	3,307	4.50	.....
III. Central Intermountain Pla- teaus.....	16	56,775	87,086	1.5	5.3	9,037	285.4	7.1	13.4	17.38	1,842	6.00	.....
IV. Western Texas.....	13	31,663	24,559	0.8	20.6	1,903	8,078.0	75.9	33.0	5.57	6,054	0.75	.....
Mountain Sections.....	44	99,837	209,657	2.1	14.5	18,047	568.8	16.1	16.1	12.94	2,082	3.66	6.3 41.8
I. Central Rockies.....	24	77,117	141,036	1.8	12.9	14,404	573.2	16.8	16.6	12.90	1,972	3.00	.....
II. Southern Rockies.....	20	22,720	68,621	3.0	1.8	3,643	551.5	13.8	14.1	13.12	2,517	4.50	.....

conditions both of the environment and of the church situation that characterized each type. The counties forming each sample were selected according to the following principles:

1. Only counties rural in 1920 were included.
2. Only counties were chosen in which a single kind of territory clearly predominated.
3. Only counties within recognized regions were included, a few isolated counties being left out of account.
4. Counties were chosen only from states that had either taken a state census in 1925 or had published school population figures both for 1920 and for 1926 (or for years just before or just after both dates.)
5. All counties of the type that met the foregoing conditions were included in the samples.

The percentages which the area and population of the sample of each type constituted of the total area and rural population of that type so far as it was delimited by the study, are included in Table VIII. It will be seen that the proportions vary from something over one-fifth to more than two-thirds, being lowest for the Cut-over districts and highest for the Dry-farming regions.

The Cut-over sample is confined to the Great Lakes region, because in the Pacific Northwest the rural Cut-over counties were few and exhibited diverse conditions.

The Grazing sample leaves out of account the Southern Intermountain Plateaus and the Grazing counties of Nevada in the Central Intermountain Plateaus, owing to lack of the requisite county figures for school population.

For the same reason the Mountain sample contained no counties from the Sierra Mountains region of California.

That the samples constitute large areas is evident when their extent is compared with blocks of states having approximately equivalent areas. The sample of Cut-over lands, the smallest of the four, is somewhat larger than the combined areas of New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The sample of Mountain territory is virtually as large as New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania combined; that of the Dry-farming regions is somewhat larger than Virginia, West Virginia and North Carolina taken together. And the largest sample, that of the Grazing country, is slightly greater than the combined areas of Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi.

Some of the most significant of the items tabulated for the sample counties of all four kinds of new territory are presented in tables X and XI. Many other points pertinent to one or more particular regions were also studied statistically. Tabulations on such matters formed the basis of many informal generalizations in the chapters on the various types.

TABLE X—DATA REGARDING THE CHURCH SITUATION IN FOUR KINDS OF NEW TERRITORY HAVING FEW CHURCH-MEMBERS IN PROPORTION TO POPULATION

Kind of Territory	Number of Counties	Number of Churches	Number of Church-Members	Average Membership per Church	Ratio of Church-Membership to Population, 1926	Number of Square Miles to a Church	Number of Inhabitants to a Church	Number of Churches per 1,000 Square Miles	Number of Churches per 1,000 Inhabitants
Cut-over (Great Lakes Region).....	33	865	80,817	93	29.6	32	316	31	3.2
Dry-farming Regions.....	82	2,062	178,338	86	32.0	57	267	18	3.7
I. Columbia Basin.....	12	312	21,775	70	21.3	68	328	..	...
II. Semi-arid part of Spring Wheat Region.....	38	1,230	112,311	91	39.2	48	228	..	...
III. Semi-arid part of Winter Wheat Region.....	32	520	44,252	85	26.3	71	323	..	...
Grazing Country.....	55	560	81,706	146	38.4	317	380	3	2.6
I. Northern Great Plains.....	14	142	13,600	96	25.6	236	374	..	...
II. Northern Intermountain Plateaus.....	12	110	7,309	66	15.1	506	435	..	...
III. Central Intermountain Plateaus.....	16	181	47,901	265	55.0	314	481	..	...
IV. Western Texas.....	13	127	12,896	102	52.5	249	193	..	...
Mountain Sections.....	44	531	48,005	90	22.9	188	395	5	2.5
I. Central Rockies.....	24	396	31,881	81	22.6	195	356	..	...
II. Southern Rockies.....	20	135	16,124	119	23.5	168	508	..	...

FOR THE OLD AREAS

Because the districts in the two kinds of old areas were not of county extent, so that tabulations of census and other data could not be employed in studying them, other methods had to be utilized, and this situation affected the selection of the samples used in studying these areas.

The sample for the Old Hilly areas was the state of Vermont, which was chosen for the following reasons:

1. Throughout practically its whole extent it is a typical hilly section.

2. For this state there were available historical data of unparalleled fullness and significance.

3. A comprehensive survey of the state, consisting of independent studies by many agencies, was in progress.

4. Systematic attempts to decrease overchurching and underchurching were being made coöperatively by the officials of the Protestant denominations to which a large proportion of the rural churches belonged.

The chief sample for the Old Level areas consisted of the agricultural section of Ohio. Study of this district was supplemented by methods explained in the chapter concerning this kind of territory and in Appendix V.

SELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVE COUNTIES FOR SURVEY

The choice of counties for field survey was based partly on information obtained in interviews with experts. Tabulations of data from the Census and other sources were used to determine which of the counties under consideration was most genuinely typical of the kind of territory in question, in regard to such matters as rainfall, density, size of farm, nature of agricultural productions, proportion of the population in the church-membership, etc. The counties are either named or indicated by letters in Table II.

Appendix IV

HISTORY OF THE RURAL CHURCHES OF VERMONT¹

The organization of churches in Vermont began in the first years of settlement.

THE PLANTING OF CHURCHES

The earliest churches were Congregational.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES

Among Congregational churches still enrolled in 1930, sixteen had been planted before 1780. The earliest settlers brought with them from their former homes in Massachusetts and Con-

¹ This appendix gives data connected with Chapter II.

necticut the institution of the tax-supported church. In 1780—that is, soon after the establishment of an independent government—the Vermont legislature formally authorized towns to levy taxes to erect meeting-houses and pay the salaries of ministers. The denomination of the majority, which in Vermont was in all cases Congregational, became the “Standing Order.” A tax to support the Standing Order was exacted of every man who could not prove that he was contributing to the support of some other church. Church and town hall were sometimes parts of the same building.

In the earliest years, a town theoretically had a single church, located at a central point, which was frequently on a hilltop. The church was in those days practically the only social organization. On Sunday mornings, from all over the town farm families who had stayed closely at home all the week, took their slow way to church on horseback or in wagons. Before church, and between the morning and afternoon preaching services, they had about their only chance to meet their friends. The social importance of church services to the community is illustrated by an ancient plan of one of the old meeting-houses of Orange County. Virtually all the pews, both in the large body of the church and in the wide galleries, were occupied by particular families, who constituted a large proportion of the families residing in the town.

Aid in forming Congregational churches was given by missionaries from Connecticut, two of whom arrived in 1780. In 1798 a home-missionary society was organized in Connecticut, one of the early tasks of which was to send Congregational ministers from that state to preach in Vermont during their summer vacations.

In 1807 came disestablishment, and the end of taxation to support Congregational churches. In the same year the Vermont Domestic Missionary Society was organized to foster the weaker churches. As settlement proceeded, Congregational churches continued to be organized. Seventy-one of the Congregational churches enrolled in the Minutes in 1930, one-third the total number now existing in the state, were organized before 1800; and fifty-nine more dated from the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

BAPTIST CHURCHES

Congregational churches held the field alone for only a short period. Before settlement had progressed far, Baptist doctrines were being preached. The first Baptist church of those now active was constituted in 1780; and by 1800 twenty-three, nearly a quarter of those surviving in 1928, had come into existence. The earliest arose in the southern part of the state. They were started, not by town governments—which to tell the truth found

them very troublesome—nor by missionary societies, but by individual Baptist preachers convinced of the vital importance of the baptism through immersion of adult believers only. From the earliest churches as bases, the Baptist preachers carried their doctrines farther northward; and half the churches now in existence had been constituted by 1825.

Two kinds of Baptist preachers sought converts, Calvinistic Baptists, who held immersion to be essential to salvation and excluded from the Communion table all that had not been immersed; and Free Will Baptists, who held less extreme views and practices. Baptists of these two kinds showed toward each other a strong controversial spirit. Both kinds of Baptists were present in some communities.

METHODIST, UNIVERSALIST AND EPISCOPAL CHURCHES

In the closing years of the eighteenth century, churches of three more kinds were established in Vermont. Zealous followers of Wesley, preaching in barns or homes the importance of conversion and of religious fervor, gave rise to Methodist churches. Universalist preachers, in righteous indignation against Calvinistic theories of divine wrath, eternal punishment and infant damnation, gathered little persecuted groups who formed themselves into Universalist societies. Episcopal missionaries came to provide for English settlers the religious ministries that were familiar and dear to them.

THE INITIATIVE OF LAYMEN

The organization of certain churches of the various denominations considered above is credited by Heminway largely to the efforts and leadership of some individual settlers. From among many references of the kind in the *Historical Gazetteer of Vermont* three are presented here, each representing a different denomination.

He (Elisha Bowman) was the real pioneer of Methodism in the town; for many years he was leader in all their social meetings, and around him grew up a thriving class.²

In 1807 Stephen Bliss, a man of decided and earnest piety, moved into Glover and for several years was the only active Christian there. He did much to interest and to unite the people in religious matters.³

Mr. John Crane, a very earnest and zealous believer, moved here and became the pioneer [of the local Universalists]. Through his influence the early preachers of the denomination in the State visited the Society.⁴

² Heminway, *Historical Gazetteer of Vermont*, Vol. IV, p. 876.

³ *Ibid.*, II, p. 205.

⁴ *Ibid.*

By 1807, the date of disestablishment, churches of six different Protestant denominations—Congregational, Methodist, Universalist, and Episcopal churches, and two kinds of Baptist churches—were present in Vermont. They had been introduced by the deliberate action of several kinds of agencies, namely: town governments; missionaries and the societies who sent them; individual preachers bent on spreading their convictions; and strong leaders of religious principles among the early settlers.

ADVENTISTS

In the 1830's the number of religious groups was swelled by the Adventists, who, led by William Miller, believed that biblical prophecies foretold the end of the world on a certain day in 1843. His followers put on white robes and awaited the expected event on the hilltops; but in vain. Miller then fixed on a day in the following year. When this date also proved mistaken it was decided that the Judgment Day was imminent but that its exact date was unknown. Of the six bodies of Adventists that developed in the United States, two were common in Vermont; the Seventh Day Adventists, who believed that Saturday rather than Sunday should be observed as the Sabbath; and the Christian Adventists, who while observing Sunday, believed that at the end of the world the righteous would become immortal and the wicked would be annihilated.

Still other denominations were already represented in Vermont in those early years. Scotch colonies planted Presbyterian churches of two varieties. Other denominations, such as the Christian and the Friends, were also represented. But none of these bodies had many churches in this part of the country.

STAUNCH THEOLOGICAL CONVICTIONS

The peculiar doctrines and usages of the denominations represented in the state were vital issues in those days. The members of each denominational group believed that their particular dogmas were taught by the Bible and were absolutely and eternally true, to the exclusion of all opinions different from their own. Those holding baptism by immersion to be right, considered baptism by sprinkling to be wrong. To those who kept Saturday holy, Sunday was not holy. For those believing in divine justice it was impossible to believe in divine mercy. Theological issues were pondered and discussed. To uphold a church of their own belief seemed to many a matter of principle: to have joined a church of another denomination would have seemed disloyal. Typical of his kind was a certain old deacon of Calvinistic beliefs, who declared that he "had rather his children should fish and hunt on the Sabbath"—highly reprehensible conduct in those days—"than attend Methodist meetings."⁵

⁵ Heminway, Vol. II, p. 623.

COMPETING CHURCHES

When families of different denominations settled in the small communities among the hills, or when flaming preachers of different schools preached there and gathered converts, the religiously minded people—who taken all together could not be otherwise than few in number—came to be enlisted in churches of two, or more frequently several, denominations. The resulting competition was recognized as unfortunate, even in those days. Nobody wanted several churches: each man wished his church to be the only one.

The usual course of events may be illustrated by what happened in the town of Bethel. Before the original settlers of Bethel left their former homes in Dresden, New Hampshire, well before the year 1800, they passed the following resolution:

Whereas, different parties and sectaries in religion often prove very detrimental to the growth and well-being of societies, which as much as possible to prevent,

Voted, that this proprietary will use every prudent and reasonable measure to discourage and hinder the introducing of such persons as settlers, etc., who may be likely to create parties and divisions in said town, and that so far as may be, we will adhere to what is commonly called the Congregational form of worship and church government in said township.

In spite of the policy of the early settlers, however, by 1816 Bethel had five church organizations.

UNION MEETING-HOUSES

But the people of Bethel could not build five meeting-houses. They combined in erecting a union building, which was financed by selling the pews. The number of pews in the hands of families of the various denominations determined both the distribution of property rights in the building among the five denominational groups, and the proportion of Sundays each group had the right to choose the preacher. Certain of the groups, as their membership increased, built meeting-houses of their own; and the pews of the union building were gradually acquired by the Universalists, who in time came to have exclusive use of the edifice.

Many similar union meeting-houses were erected in Vermont. The seventeen towns of Orange County had not fewer than twenty-three of them. Certain towns in the state never had any other kind of church edifices. The number of denominational groups using one building was frequently three or four and sometimes even more than this. For example, the ownership of the union meeting-house of Calais, built in 1823, was shared by six groups: Calvinist Baptist, Free Baptist, Christian, Congregational, Methodist, and Universalist. For a long time the Universalists had a preacher thirty Sundays each year, the Cal-

vinist Baptists ten, the Congregationalists nine, and the other denominations from three to six each.⁶

Union meeting-houses had two advantages. They made it possible for young and small communities to have a church building and religious services, although no one denominational group was strong enough to provide them; and they involved a certain amount of interdenominational coöperation.

At the same time, these union buildings had serious disadvantages. Where several groups shared a house, it was frequently the case that no one group was strong enough to support a regular minister, still less a resident minister, so that religious ministry was confined almost exclusively to preaching; and sermons of various doctrinal tendencies in rotation inevitably brought sectarian differences into relief. Moreover, the denominational groups that jointly owned a union meeting-house were almost always organized as "societies," which were secular associations formed merely to hold church property and conduct church business.

With Congregational and Baptist societies, a church was frequently but not invariably associated. Universalists rarely had church organizations in those days, having been prejudiced against them by the persecution to which the early Universalists had been subjected by churches of other denominations. Undenominational societies without church organizations were also found. Methodists had church organizations and no societies; but at that time Methodists were less numerous than they have become since.

Now where there was a union meeting-house, the secular interests of the society were relatively prominent. Besides, the absence of church organizations with their discipline, their opportunities for service, and their training in religious leadership, conduced to a lower degree of religious culture in the community. The societies without churches, too, had a less tenacious hold on existence than churches. And finally, the easy terms on which any denominational group could have the use of a church building under this arrangement, tended to forward the formation of two or more denominational groups in competition with one another.

In some places certain denominational groups dropped out in course of time. Then one or two churches fell heir to the building. Pairs of churches, each with ministers preaching alternately, were long present in two centers of Orange County. In not a few towns, however, none of the groups—necessarily small—was strong enough to remain active. A typical instance was the town of Granville, which is tucked away in the heart of the mountains and is cut by a deep gulf. Its only church edifice

⁶ *Heminway*, Vol. IV, p. 144.

was a union building. Of the church history of this town the following report is given in Heminway:⁷

The religious denominations were originally Congregational and Baptist. In 1840 the Methodists and Universalists had very much increased. In the winter of 1843, a sect calling themselves Adventists held a series of protracted meetings, in which great religious excitement prevailed, and the different churches for a long time expected that great numbers would be added to them; but . . . one extreme was followed by another, and the churches not possessing sufficient stamina to resist the reaction that followed, crumbled beneath its weight. Since that time a general dearth in religious culture has been but too visible.⁸

In some towns, instead of combining to erect union churches, the denominational groups built separate meeting-houses. This was the case, for example, in the town of Albany. Here, according to Heminway, Congregationalists, Methodists and Baptists had all formed church organizations before 1832. The account continues:

From 1830 to 1833 the religious interest appears to have created quite an excitement. Additions were made to some of the then existing churches. To the Congregational Church thirty-five were added and their prospects appeared to be bright. A division among the members as to location [i. e., of a proposed church building] postponed the work, schisms crept in, their minister left, and the church was very much weakened. This . . . offered a fine opportunity to the Methodists, to start the work of building them a house. This element had been very much strengthened by immigration for several years past. In 1833 they erected the first meeting-house in this town.

In 1841 the Congregationalists built a church in the center of the town. The following year a church was erected at Albany village by the Baptists, who from the time they were strong enough to pay a preacher had occupied sometimes the town hall and sometimes the Methodist chapel. About four years later the Congregational church burned down, and the Baptists sold the Congregationalists a share in their building, which remained a union house for twenty years. Then the Baptists bought back the rights held by the Congregationalists. The following year the Congregationalists erected a building in the same center with the Baptist church. In South Albany Wesleyan Methodists gathered a society, and later Free Will Baptists erected a church in the northeastern part of the town. This account, while indicating the methods adopted by the small churches to provide themselves with places of worship, illustrates very clearly the perpetual competition among several neighboring denominational churches.

⁷ Heminway, Vol. I, p. 40.

⁸ Ibid.

VICISSITUDES IN CHURCH LIFE

The same account also affords several examples of fluctuations in the vitality of individual churches. Such fluctuations were common. Sometimes, either from increased religious interest or in consequence of the advent of representatives of a particular denomination, the membership and activity of some church was reinforced. At other times, internal dissensions, loss of a minister, the burning of a meeting-house, or other circumstances, were followed by a waning of the activities of the church. Heminway reports many examples of such vicissitudes. Regarding a church in Orange County, for instance, it is said:

The church had got very much reduced, and things were in a very dead condition, when it was revived again, the meeting-house was repaired, . . . a minister . . . settled.⁹

Under this treatment the church became stronger and still lives. "Seasons of coldness and dearth," to use a phrase from Heminway, were frequently experienced, and many churches fell into inactivity. In some cases no such methods of revival were adopted as in the instance described just above; and the church died. Abandonment of churches is frequently mentioned all through the history.

TOWNS WITH POOR MINISTRY

Many whole towns had little religious ministry. Some did not even have a union meeting-house. In certain cases the denominational groups failed, in the words of Heminway, to "have charity large enough for each other to unite and build a union house." In another large class of instances, the town was so cut up by hills that the people could never agree on a common location for a church. The people of still other towns had little interest in religion, such as one regarding which Heminway says:

Meetings were few and far between and thinly attended when there were any. The Sabbath was desecrated, being used for a day of pleasure. . . . [This town] became noted as a wicked place.¹⁰

The environmental conditions and the church situation of Vermont thus described prevailed through the eighty years from about 1760 to about 1840.

EFFECTS OF THE WESTWARD MIGRATION

About 1840 the churches began to feel the effects of the westward migration. In 1850 the condition of many Congregational churches was recognized as serious. An eloquent address was offered before the state Congregational Convention. A study of the situation was made. Part of the responsibility for the religious depression was assigned to the outward migration. Other

⁹ Heminway, Vol. II, p. 850.

¹⁰ Vol. II, p. 788.

causes of the decline, according to Dr. C. C. Merrill, were "internal convulsions among churches, occasioned by anti-masonic, anti-slavery agitations, Millerism and eccentric evangelism."¹¹

It was clear that the whole situation of the churches had altered; and it was believed that if the weak churches in isolated districts were to be saved, the changed conditions must be met through the adoption of new policies of church work.

THE ITINERANT EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGN

In 1856, after much consideration, the so-called "itinerant" system was adopted by the Congregational agencies. Theological students were employed to perform missionary service during their summer vacations, especially in the small communities without regular ministers. For several years, large numbers of these students were employed and a vigorous campaign was conducted. This method of providing religious ministry is still used in Vermont by several denominations, though on a greatly reduced scale.

NEW KINDS OF RELIGIOUS GROUPS

In the years between 1850 and 1880, several new factors entered the church situation. To begin with, Irish immigrants, brought in to work on the construction of the railways, had settled on farms; and to serve them, Catholic churches had been established.

In the second place, there was much excitement over Spiritualism in the sixties and seventies, and a considerable number of families adopted this form of belief. The Spiritualists in Vermont were strongly in opposition to the churches. They did not usually form organizations and rarely held regular meetings; but individual families of Spiritualists were widely distributed. Catholics and Spiritualists, different as they were, both added to the number of groups into which the people of the small communities were divided in matters of belief.

A change of an opposite kind was that many of the small societies that had once held preaching services in union meeting-houses gradually faded out. By 1880 many of these buildings were occupied by a single church, and very few were utilized by more than two churches.

RELIGIOUS CAMPAIGN UNDER Y. M. C. A.

In the decade 1870 to 1880, anxiety concerning the welfare of the churches was again aroused, and an interdenominational campaign, in which laymen took a prominent part, was conducted under the leadership of the Young Men's Christian Association.

By 1880, declining agricultural prosperity resulting from the competition of western farms, and increased westward migration

¹¹ "History of the Congregational Churches in Vermont," in *Crockett's History of Vermont* (New York; Century History Company, 1923), p. 476.

with consequent loss of population, had greatly affected the situation of the churches of rural Vermont. As part of the present study, an inquiry covering Orange County was made into the proportions of the population consisting of church-members in 1880, by communities and kinds of communities; and into the proportions of families that were then under the influence of churches.¹²

THE CHURCH SITUATION IN ORANGE COUNTY IN 1880

In 1880, Orange County had many churches—sixty-seven in its 676 square miles. Competing churches were the rule. Among fifty-seven churches in villages and hamlets, forty-one were each in the presence of at least one other church.

The old residents, most of them church officers of long standing, who were consulted regarding church-membership and attendance in 1880, usually began by saying, "Fifty years ago everybody went to church." But when the names of resident families of the earlier period were read to them, they recognized many exceptions. "He was an atheist," they would say. "That man was a drunkard. Such and such a family were Universalists, if anything. Those others were Spiritualists. The next were not churchgoing people." After weeks of investigation, it was ascertained that in 1880 something over three-fifths of the families were represented either in the church-membership or in attendance at services of worship or at Sunday school. Such families came under the influence of the moral teachings of the church, formed a body of persons from whom new members could more readily be recruited, and in many cases contributed to church expenditures.

Larger proportions of families adhered to the churches in the villages and hamlets than in the open country. The proportion for villages was 73.3 per cent.; for hamlets, 74.4 per cent.; and for the open country, only 55.6 per cent.

In the membership of the churches were enrolled only one-sixth of the people. This figure does not include all the church workers. Four religious groups, three Universalist churches and one Union church, consisted of societies without church organizations; and to these adhered 185 families. Besides, both Congregational and Baptist churches originally had societies as well as religious organizations; and by a long-established custom some upright men—including not a few genuinely religious men—belonged to the society, contributed to the support of the church and helped to manage its affairs, without becoming members of the religious organization. However, as there were only a few of these men connected with any one church, and as churches of some denominations, such as the Methodist, had no societies, the

¹² Appendix V gives a detailed account of the methods used in this inquiry.

lowness of proportion is not seriously misleading. In Orange County, at least, this period was certainly no golden age of the Church.

The proportion of the people enlisted in church-membership varied with size of community in somewhat the same manner as the proportions of families adhering to the churches. The churches in 1880 enrolled one-fourth of the villagers, one-fifth of the inhabitants of hamlets, and one-seventh of those residing in the open country.

The proportions of population in the churches varied from town to town. Those of the eleven towns without villages ranged from a fifth down to about a twentieth. Six of the towns had proportions below 15 per cent., and two of these had proportions below 10 per cent. Moreover, the proportions for the open-country districts of towns containing villages ran from a quarter to little more than an eighth. In 1880, accordingly, many districts having only small minorities of the people in the churches, were present, especially in the country.

At a time when people were poorer and fewer than they had been, and when many new interests had come to rival the churches in public attention, two striking conditions characterized the church situation in Orange County: competing churches in small centers, and comparatively few church-members in proportion to population in the country districts. Both these conditions were general throughout Vermont.

Soon after 1880, the Congregationalists again investigated religious conditions, especially in the remote rural districts. In consequence of unsatisfactory conditions thus brought to light, young women from Moody training schools were sent out two by two to visit in homes and to hold cottage meetings. Through their efforts, according to Dr. Merrill,¹³ old churches were revived and new churches were organized.

WORK OF INTERDENOMINATIONAL AGENCIES

As the population of small centers declined, the membership of the competing churches grew so small as to endanger the efficiency and even the continued existence of these churches. For the purpose of eliminating competition, the Protestant religious leaders of the state, several years before 1900, formed the Vermont Interdenominational Comity Commission, following the example of the religious leaders of Maine. This organization was succeeded some years later by the Vermont Conference of Denominational Superintendents and Secretaries. These successive agencies considered the communities where competition seemed to them to be harmful to the welfare of the churches,

¹³ "History of the Congregational Churches in Vermont," in Crockett's *History of Vermont*, p. 477.

and coöperatively took measures to reduce or eliminate such competition.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST COMPETITION

Serious difficulties stood in the way of their efforts. In this section, which was old for America, all institutions had become firmly established. The ancient churches in particular were objects of pride and love. About them clustered ancestral traditions and intimate personal memories. Group loyalties, dating from the days of intense theological convictions and nourished by the rivalry of generations, still persisted. Local prejudices, rivalries and personal antipathies complicated the problem in some places.

In the course of years, too, many churches had acquired income property, with which denominational restrictions were frequently associated, and which invariably lessened the financial burden of maintaining church work as a separate church.

These obstacles were counterbalanced to some extent by certain other facts. The denominations whose leaders were endeavoring to unite competing local churches, that is, the Baptist, Congregational and Methodist state bodies, enrolled a large majority of the Protestant church-members of the state.¹⁴ In 1916, too, the Northern Baptist and the Free Will Baptist bodies were united, with consequent unions of some pairs of local Baptist churches. Moreover, the denominational superintendents included men of force, tact and influence.

By public addresses and personal interviews, as well as through official acts, the superintendents exerted their united influence toward the elimination of competition. In consequence, in some communities weak churches were closed in favor of stronger neighboring churches of different denomination; in other places, pairs of churches were consolidated as churches under a single denomination. In still other localities, according to an arrangement much the commonest in Vermont, pairs or groups of churches were federated. In case of federation, whenever the local people would consent, it was arranged that ministerial and supervisory leadership should be provided by a particular denomination; but if objection was made to this plan, a so-called "fifty-fifty" agreement was adopted.

Both in cases of complete withdrawal, and in cases of federation with leadership from a specified denomination, the purpose was that a denomination yielding ground in one community should take the lead in another, so that relative denominational strength might not be greatly altered by the readjustment.

¹⁴ In 1926, the Baptist, Congregational and Methodist bodies of Vermont enrolled 56.7 per cent. of the churches of the state, and 74.3 per cent. of the church-members. These figures include those of federated churches, almost all of which were composed of units belonging to the same denominations.

In most cases, beginning with the very earliest federations, the initiative has been with the denominational officials acting in coöperation. A few unions, however, were brought to pass by the laymen of the communities. The elimination of competition was also furthered by the spontaneous weakening and abandonment of certain churches of denominations not represented in the interdenominational agencies.

A pamphlet published in 1909 reported that up to that date competition had at least been lessened, and sometimes entirely eliminated, within many communities. Again, between 1917 and 1925, the work attained at least partial, and in some cases complete, success in eighty-three communities, some of which, presumably, were communities included in the earlier list, in which further progress had since been accomplished. In 1926, the Religious Census reported forty federated churches in Vermont; and since then several new federations have been consummated each year. Unions as denominational churches were in addition. By 1930 there were in active existence in Vermont well over fifty united churches, most of them in rural territory, a number at least equal to one in fifty of the rural churches of the state.

Denominational competition had been eliminated in many small communities and had been lessened in others. The denominational officials believed that if the work continued to progress at the same rate, harmful competition within communities would be virtually eliminated by 1937 so far as the coöperating denominations were concerned.

Meanwhile, however, as the improvement of the roads and other recent changes decreased the isolation one from another of neighboring communities, there began to be an appreciable increase in competition among the churches of such communities. The competition was particularly damaging to the churches of small centers near a large village. This form of competition was combatted by the Conference of Denominational Superintendents and Secretaries through indirect methods. The same agency was endeavoring to provide religious ministry for country districts with few church-members.

Appendix V

HOW PERCENTAGES INDICATING DEGREES OF ENLISTMENT IN 1880 WERE OBTAINED FOR ORANGE COUNTY, VERMONT¹

One of the minor objectives of the study was to compare church effectiveness at the time of the survey with church effectiveness fifty years earlier in a representative county of Vermont.

¹ This appendix explains how data used in Chapter II were obtained.

FIELD OF INQUIRY

The investigation was made in Vermont because of the existence for that state of historical sources of unparalleled value. As the special field of the inquiry, Orange County was selected because it was representative of a large part of rural Vermont in the following respects:

1. It presented the characteristic hilly contour.
2. It had no large town or city.
3. The predominant occupation was an agriculture specializing in dairying, with whole milk as its main product.
4. It had districts served by railroads, and other districts away from rail communication.
5. Since 1850 the population had shown an almost uninterrupted decline.
6. The people were largely of old American stock; yet French Canadians had taken farms in several towns.
7. Though summer visitors frequented certain sections, a large part of the county had very few of them.

TESTS APPLIED

The two tests of enlistment in churches used throughout the field work were the proportion of the population in the church-membership and the proportion of families adhering to churches. For the time of the survey, percentages of both kinds had been calculated for centers grouped according to number of inhabitants, for the open-country districts taken as a whole, and for the open-country districts of several sections of the county differing in environmental conditions.

DATA REQUIRED

As a basis for percentages for 1880, comparable with those secured for the time of the survey, the following data, as of 1880, were required for each population unit:

1. Number of inhabitants.
2. Number of families.
3. Number of church-members.
4. Number of church families. (A church family, both in 1929 and in 1880, was considered to be a family one or more members of which were members of a local church or attended its services or its Sunday school.)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

1. The United States Census for 1880 afforded the population of the seventeen towns and of the incorporated villages.
2. On the maps of Beers' *Atlas of Orange County*, dated 1877, the name of each property owner was printed at the point where his property was located; houses were indicated; and the school districts of the day were outlined.

3. Walton's *Vermont Register* for 1880 gave the location, in center or neighborhood as well as by towns, of each church; and showed whether or not a church had a minister at the time.

4. Church rolls, in most cases manuscript folio books, but in a few cases pamphlets of a date near 1880, gave lists of the members with date of reception. From these rolls those who had joined the church before 1880 could be identified. Complete rolls were used for forty churches and partial lists for three additional churches.²

5. The memories of old residents.

6. Geneological sections of town histories, consulted by a number of informants to ascertain date of death, removal, marriage, or other biographical facts affecting date of joining the church or of leaving the community.

7. Denominational minutes, which afforded figures for church-membership. Certain denominations published figures for resident membership. Membership figures from published denominational statistics were obtained for forty-four of the sixty-seven churches.

HOW NUMBER OF CHURCH-MEMBERS AND CHURCH FAMILIES WAS ESTIMATED

A card was prepared for each town, showing—

1. Population in 1880 of the town and of any incorporated village in it.

2. The communities.

3. By communities, each church given by Walton's *Vermont Register* for 1879.

4. For each church, as far as practicable, certain data from denominational minutes, including total membership and resident membership when available.

The names of owners of real estate were taken from the town maps of Beers' *Atlas of Orange County*, with the number of the school district in which each resided, and were arranged in alphabetical lists, one for each center and one for the open-country parts of each town. These lists were transferred to the left-hand columns of tables, which provided columns for checking the

² The churches for which no roll could be found were classified as follows:

1. Societies without church-membership, four having been Universalist and one Union.....	5
2. Roman Catholic churches.....	3
3. Parts of Methodist circuits which had never had separate rolls in the hands of lay clerks.....	8
4. Churches that had either lost their rolls, or that could not get at them. One roll had been built into the church under the altar during alterations, another was in storage, etc.....	8
Total	24

Comparatively few rolls had accordingly been lost. Indeed, they were carefully preserved as valuable records.

families and recording the number of members—if any—included in each family, that belonged to each church in the town or readily accessible from any part of the town.

If a church roll was to be found, a list was then made of all names of persons recorded as having joined the church by June 30, 1880, unless some indication showed that before that date they had died, moved away, or severed their connection with the church. Dismissals, and even deaths, were frequently not noted, however; and dates of removal from the community were very rarely given. But the list secured included among many others, the names of all those who had been resident members of that church in 1880.

The tables listing the names of the families of a town, and the list of members compiled from the roll of some church of that town, were then taken to some old resident acquainted with the church situation in 1880. A surprising number of former church clerks were found and consulted. Lacking a church officer, preference was frequently given to some one who had moved into the town about 1880 or who had been a child there at such a period that his earliest memories of church personages would be about that date. The intimate knowledge, confident memories, and conscientious effort to tell the exact truth, that were exhibited by those interviewed, gave assurance of a considerable degree of accuracy in the data obtained.

With the aid of the local informants, the names on the list of members were either canceled or credited to the proper family. Names of tenant families were added to the lists corresponding to their places of residence. Members residing in accessible parts of neighboring towns were credited to the proper family in their town.

The list of families accessible to the church, as indicated by the number of their school district, but containing no members, was then read, and additional families containing attendants were checked.

When a church roll was not available, a list of the resident members in 1880 was reconstructed from the memories of the persons consulted, with the aid of the lists of families from the atlas. The number of resident members obtained in this way was often very close to the figure reported in the denominational minutes. On the first occasion when this method was used, for instance, after two hours with a bright old woman of ninety-three who wished to tell a story about every name read to her, a roll of forty resident members had been prepared. The resident membership ascribed to the church in 1880 by the denominational minutes was just forty.

By combining the data thus acquired, totals were obtained for the number of church-members and of church families in each locality.

HOW TOTAL NUMBER OF RESIDENT FAMILIES WAS ESTIMATED

The number of families resident, for the open-country parts of towns and for centers, were then estimated in the following ways.

For the open country, it was assumed that there were as many families as there were farm houses. Several farms, each having a house, were frequently assigned to the same owner; but extra houses were evidently occupied to a considerable extent by tenants, who in 1880 constituted 11.3 per cent. of the farmers.

The families in each unincorporated center were carefully listed. To names afforded by the atlas maps of centers, which were on a large scale and evidently very complete so far as owners were concerned, others, which were suggested in part by church rolls, and which doubtless belonged to families renting their homes, were added by local informants. The resulting number of families was regularly greater than the number of houses on the maps of the centers, owing to the fact that two families frequently occupied one house.

HOW POPULATION FIGURES WERE ESTIMATED

The population of each center was estimated by multiplying the number of families thus obtained by a number representing an assumed size of family, which was partly determined by the average size discovered to prevail in 1929 in centers of different sizes.

The estimated populations of the unincorporated centers of each town, with the census population of any incorporated center, were then added. The sum was subtracted from the census population of the town to obtain a tentative figure for open-country population. To check this, it was then divided by the estimated number of families—that is, by the number of houses—in the open country. The resulting average size of family was usually slightly larger than census figures for 1920, a relation which was considered to accord with the probable situation in the country. If the average size of family was larger or smaller than for the other towns, all the figures for the town under consideration were carefully checked; and in a few cases, notably that of Ely, a mining village that had completely disappeared since 1880, estimates as to number of families or size of family were revised.

RELIABILITY

The reliability of the figures secured in the manner described above was supported by the following circumstances:

1. The population figures for towns and incorporated villages were derived from the United States Census for the year in question.

2. The atlas maps utilized were considered very accurate, and the atlas was published in 1877.

3. The figures for resident church-membership corresponded closely with denominational statistics, except when rolls had plainly been neglected.

The only kinds of data in which inaccuracy is likely to have occurred are these:

1. The number of church-families for a few towns may be understated, since church families in distant corners, or on the edges of neighboring towns, may have been overlooked.

2. The membership of churches for which no roll dating back to 1880 was available, may be too small in a few cases where the persons consulted may have had incomplete knowledge or memory of the facts.

Since these conceivable errors would make the numbers of church-members and church families too low, the percentages given would be understatements rather than overstatements.

The percentages prepared through the methods described in this appendix are set forth in the accompanying table, side by side with corresponding percentages for 1929 based on survey data. Generalizations derived from these two sets of percentages are presented in Chapter III.

TABLE XI—PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHURCHES, AND PERCENTAGE OF ALL FAMILIES ADHERING TO THE CHURCHES, IN 1929 AND IN 1880, FOR ORANGE COUNTY, VERMONT; BY SIZE OF COMMUNITY AND FOR OPEN-COUNTRY DISTRICTS VARYING IN CONDITIONS

SIZE OF COMMUNITY	PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION IN CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP		PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES ADHERING TO CHURCHES	
	1929	1880	1929	1880
County.....	18.2	16.8	40.9	62.3
Villages.....	25.1	25.2	57.4	73.3
Hamlets.....	23.2	19.8	58.1	74.4
Open country.....	13.8	13.7	28.3	55.6
Open-country parts of—				
1. Four isolated and thinly settled towns....	5.4	12.3	16.8	45.4
2. Three towns lying about the largest village.....	13.6	15.4	27.0	56.9
3. Four towns partly in the Connecticut Valley.....	14.0	15.4	34.6	65.6
4. Three towns containing French Canadians.....	21.1	12.9	30.4	58.5

INDICES OF CHANGING SOCIAL PATTERN ¹

In the three Ohio counties surveyed, the decline of country neighborhoods and the consequent abandonment of country churches were observed to be associated with certain environmental tendencies. To discover where in the United States similar country-church conditions were present or impending, it was desired to measure the comparative strength of the different environmental tendencies in the various states of the Union. The indices employed were necessarily limited to such as could be based on reliable statistical data uniform for all the states. The indices chosen, with the sources of the statistical data upon which they are based, are given below, grouped under the tendencies they are designed to measure. Table XII presents the indices by states, with the rank of the different states in respect to each index. Six maps, showing ranges of as many indices by states, are presented in the text as Diagrams XIV-XIX. Very general interferences based on this material are given in the text at the end of Chapter III.

ROAD IMPROVEMENT WITH USE OF MOTOR CARS

Mileage of surfaced road per 100 square miles of area, 1929.

Sources: *Highways Handbook*, Highway Education Board, 1929; Census, 1920, Vol. I.

Automobiles per 1,000 of population, 1927.

Source: *Recent Economic Changes in the United States* (New York; McGraw-Hill, 1929), Vol. I, p. 339.

Per cent. of farms on surfaced roads.

Source: Data from *Census of Agriculture: 1925*.

Per cent. of farms on unimproved dirt roads.

Source: Same as above.

INDUSTRIALIZATION

Ratio of number of laborers employed in manufacturing to number of farmers plus number of farm laborers, 1920.

Sources: Census, 1920, volumes on Agriculture and Manufacturing.

Ratio of value of manufactured products (added by manufacture) to value of farm sales.

¹ This appendix contains statistical data on which the last few pages of Chapter III are based.

Sources: Census, volume on Manufactures; *Market Data Handbook of United States*, U. S. Department of Commerce, 1929.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Per cent. of area in farms, 1925.

Source: *Census of Agriculture, 1925*.

Per cent. of increase in number of farms, 1910 to 1925.

Source: Same as above.

DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

Rural density, 1920.

Source: Census, 1920, Vol. I.

Per cent. of increase in rural population, 1910 to 1920.

Source: Same as above.

Number of centers per 1,000 square miles of area.

Source: Same as above.

CONSOLIDATION OF SCHOOLS

Ratio of number of consolidated schools to number of one-room schoolhouses.

Source: *Biennial Census of Education, 1924-1926*, published 1928.

Per cent. of school buildings in use that are occupied by one-room schools.

Source: Same as above.

TABLE XII—INDICES OF ENVIRON

DIVISION AND STATE	PER CENT. OF FARMS										Ratio of Num- ber of Laborers Employed in Manufactur- ing to Num- ber of Farm Laborers, 1920		Ratio of Value of Manu- factured Products 1920, to Average Value of Farms, 1921-2	
	Mileage of Surfaced Roads per 100 Square Miles, 1929		Passenger Cars per 1,000 Inhabitants, 1927		ON Surfaced Roads, 1925		Unim- proved Dirt Roads, 1925							
	[Miles Rank	Cars Rank	% Rank	% Rank	% Rank	% Rank	% Rank	% Rank	% Rank	% Rank	% Rank	% Rank		
New England:														
Maine.....	17.7	19	168	23	31.9	34	41.6	24	132.8	35	268.4	34		
New Hampshire..	28.2	26	183	28	36.9	36	44.1	26	292.8	42	537.2	40		
Vermont.....	53.2	36	208	33	37.7	37	38.6	16	79.9	30	127.2	20		
Massachusetts....	109.3	45	145	16	50.2	44	25.8	4	1448.6	47	2583.5	47		
Rhode Island.....	92.8	44	140	14	39.0	40	25.7	3	2088.3	48	3821.8	48		
Connecticut.....	71.6	43	146	17	32.5	35	44.5	27	820.3	45	1452.4	26		
Middle Atlantic:														
New York.....	65.3	42	142	15	38.0	38	42.8	25	435.5	44	1099.4	44		
New Jersey.....	116.2	47	156	20	49.8	43	34.8	12	1038.2	46	1879.6	46		
Pennsylvania.....	55.5	39	139	13	20.1	22	58.8	45	396.8	43	1028.5	43		
East North Central:														
Ohio.....	113.5	46	205	32	57.2	47	31.7	9	204.2	41	645.2	41		
Indiana.....	141.5	48	221	38	72.3	48	20.3	1	94.9	33	298.1	35		
Illinois.....	35.7	31	172	25	21.7	24	40.1	20	179.6	40	465.5	38		
Michigan.....	42.0	33	222	39	45.5	42	34.4	11	175.1	39	740.2	42		
Wisconsin.....	48.4	35	209	35	38.7	39	33.1	10	94.4	32	242.5	33		
West North Central:														
Minnesota.....	42.3	34	210	36	30.0	33	29.2	7	41.1	24	89.2	15		
Iowa.....	27.3	25	268	47	11.2	13	46.7	33	25.6	16	41.3	6		
Missouri.....	17.9	20	174	27	13.5	17	47.1	35	51.2	27	187.6	29		
North Dakota....	4.2	6	226	40	1.7	1	41.0	23	3.9	1	4.6	1		
South Dakota.....	6.3	11	220	37	5.4	9	40.3	22	5.8	2	8.4	2		
Nebraska.....	6.1	10	245	44	2.2	2	36.5	13	20.5	10	28.3	4		
Kansas.....	5.6	9	245	43	4.4	6	38.2	14	26.9	17	46.5	8		
South Atlantic:														
Delaware.....	55.7	40	157	21	22.4	25	45.3	29	174.9	38	322.8	36		
Maryland.....	55.3	38	166	22	29.2	31	54.6	43	158.6	37	514.6	39		
Virginia.....	29.5	27	113	9	13.4	16	61.7	46	40.2	23	170.9	28		
West Virginia....	16.3	18	128	10	8.3	11	72.6	48	66.0	28	387.0	37		
North Carolina....	58.2	41	135	12	8.3	10	46.2	32	33.7	20	170.6	27		
South Carolina....	54.6	37	97	4	3.4	4	54.4	42	19.1	9	91.3	16		
Georgia.....	23.8	22	83	2	3.8	5	47.7	36	20.7	11	143.9	24		
Florida.....	25.6	24	244	42	15.3	19	49.1	37	76.1	29	166.6	26		
East South Central:														
Kentucky.....	40.1	32	101	5	26.8	29	49.5	39	17.6	8	115.3	19		
Tennessee.....	32.5	29	108	6	23.2	26	45.1	28	24.0	15	134.8	22		
Alabama.....	33.9	30	83	1	11.6	14	54.0	41	21.6	12	131.9	21		
Mississippi.....	30.5	28	110	7	26.4	28	39.8	18	11.0	4	58.4	12		
West South Central:														
Arkansas.....	12.9	16	91	3	12.2	15	50.8	40	12.6	6	46.5	7		
Louisiana.....	23.6	21	112	8	24.4	27	45.4	31	36.2	21	204.7	31		
Oklahoma.....	5.3	8	184	29	2.6	3	47.0	34	9.9	3	37.0	5		
Texas.....	9.6	13	185	30	13.6	18	40.1	19	14.2	7	48.9	9		
Mountain:														
Montana.....	2.2	4	133	11	5.2	8	49.3	38	22.7	14	54.1	11		
Idaho.....	10.2	14	171	24	27.4	30	24.8	2	22.7	13	52.1	10		
Wyoming.....	1.1	1	189	31	4.5	7	55.8	44	30.2	18	93.7	17		
Colorado.....	6.7	12	228	41	15.4	20	38.3	15	39.3	22	79.1	14		
New Mexico.....	1.9	3	147	18	9.0	12	68.9	47	12.5	5	26.6	3		
Arizona.....	3.0	5	174	26	21.4	23	40.2	21	32.5	19	137.1	23		
Utah.....	4.9	7	155	19	29.2	32	39.3	17	46.6	25	108.2	18		
Nevada.....	1.8	2	265	46	17.6	21	45.3	30	48.0	26	78.5	13		
Pacific:														
Washington.....	24.5	23	209	34	53.5	46	26.7	5	144.1	36	216.9	32		
Oregon.....	12.5	15	251	45	52.2	45	30.8	8	83.5	31	160.8	25		
California.....	16.1	17	334	48	39.8	41	27.0	6	122.8	34	192.0	30		

* Insufficient data.

† Less than one-tenth of one per cent.

MENTAL CHANGES, BY STATES

Per Cent. of Area in Farms, 1925		Per Cent. of Increase in Number of Farms, 1910-1925		Rural Density, 1920		Per Cent. of Increase in Rural Popu- lation, 1910-1920		Number of Centers of 5,000 Inhabitants and Over, per 1,000 Square Miles, 1920		Ratio of Number of Consoli- dated Schools to Number of One-room School- houses, 1925		Per Cent. of School- Houses in Use, Occupied by One-room Schools, 1925	
%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
27.0	7	-16.6	3	15.7	18	-2.4	12	0.6	31	16.2	30	73.7	35
39.1	15	-22.1	2	*	*	*	*	1.6	40	2.5	6	65.8	27
67.2	36	-15.1	4	26.6	25	-5.7	5	1.0	37	4.6	13	79.8	37
46.0	18	-9.4	13	*	*	*	*	14.1	47	*	*	23.9	4
45.3	17	-26.1	1	*	*	*	*	17.8	48	6.5	20	21.5	3
59.4	28	-13.3	6	92.2	45	16.0	38	5.2	45	*	*	40.2	11
63.2	31	-12.5	7	37.7	32	-6.9	4	1.8	42	4.8	15	68.1	32
40.0	16	-11.4	8	90.6	44	8.1	30	9.8	46	53.3	43	24.5	5
56.8	24	-8.6	15	69.4	43	2.6	18	3.8	44	5.2	17	66.7	29
85.2	44	-10.1	11	51.1	40	-0.9	15	2.3	43	20.6	34	66.9	30
86.3	47	-9.1	14	40.2	33	-7.0	3	1.5	39	35.1	41	53.9	19
85.7	46	-10.4	10	37.2	31	-3.7	9	1.6	41	1.2	1	74.9	36
49.0	20	-7.1	16	24.8	21	-3.8	8	1.0	38	3.9	9	91.2	47
61.8	30	9.0	33	25.1	22	4.4	22	0.7	34	1.2	2	81.9	41
58.1	25	20.6	40	16.5	19	9.0	32	0.3	19	5.2	16	80.3	38
93.6	48	-1.6	23	27.5	26	-1.0	13	0.6	32	4.0	12	86.1	46
74.2	40	-6.0	20	26.4	24	-4.1	6	0.4	24	3.9	10	81.3	39
76.4	41	2.2	27	8.0	12	8.7	31	0.9	36	11.7	25	85.1	44
65.1	32	2.4	28	7.0	11	5.4	25	0.1	7	2.4	5	93.2	48
85.5	45	-1.5	24	11.6	15	1.1	17	0.2	11	1.6	3	82.3	42
83.6	43	-6.7	17	14.1	17	-3.8	7	0.3	18	2.4	4	84.5	43
71.5	39	-5.3	21	52.0	41	-2.9	10	0.5	27	5.6	19	1.9	1
69.7	38	0.2	26	58.4	42	-8.9	2	0.8	35	*	*	57.8	22
66.8	34	5.3	32	40.6	34	3.2	20	0.5	28	24.1	37	52.5	17
58.4	27	-6.5	18	45.5	38	10.3	34	0.7	33	8.3	21	72.0	34
59.6	29	11.7	36	42.4	36	9.6	33	0.6	30	32.4	39	37.9	8
54.5	23	-2.1	22	45.6	39	7.7	29	0.5	26	19.9	32	48.3	14
58.4	26	-14.4	5	36.9	30	4.7	23	0.4	25	24.5	38	52.3	16
16.7	5	18.4	38	11.2	14	14.8	37	0.3	16	16.0	29	41.3	12
77.4	42	-0.3	25	44.4	37	2.8	19	0.5	29	4.8	14	85.7	45
67.1	35	2.7	29	41.4	35	-1.0	14	0.3	20	19.1	31	56.9	20
51.0	21	-9.6	12	35.9	29	4.0	21	0.4	21	13.9	28	53.3	18
54.1	22	-6.3	19	33.4	28	-2.5	11	0.4	22	38.2	42	39.8	10
46.5	19	3.4	30	27.8	27	6.6	27	0.3	14	4.0	11	65.7	26
30.4	11	9.9	34	25.8	23	0.9	16	0.3	15	33.0	40	47.3	13
69.5	37	3.7	31	21.4	20	11.4	35	0.4	23	12.2	26	57.8	21
65.3	33	11.5	35	12.0	16	6.5	26	0.2	12	20.5	33	36.9	7
35.0	12	78.9	48	2.6	5	55.3	45	0.1	6	3.5	7	71.0	33
15.2	4	31.8	44	3.8	7	22.3	41	0.1	9	5.4	18	58.6	24
29.9	10	41.2	45	1.4	2	33.4	43	0.1	3	8.3	22	81.6	40
36.4	14	25.7	42	4.7	9	23.4	42	0.1	8	10.1	24	67.2	31
35.5	13	-11.2	9	2.4	4	5.2	24	†	2	173.0	44	58.0	23
15.2	3	17.1	37	1.9	3	53.5	44	†0.1	5	21.2	35	39.6	9
9.5	2	19.9	39	2.8	6	16.7	39	0.1	4	*	*	14.9	2
5.8	1	44.4	46	0.5	1	-15.3	1	†	1	12.9	27	66.0	28
29.5	9	30.4	43	9.1	13	13.3	36	0.3	13	23.6	36	51.8	15
23.1	6	22.9	41	4.1	8	7.3	28	0.1	10	3.7	8	62.7	25
27.6	8	54.7	47	7.0	10	20.6	40	0.3	17	8.5	23	35.8	6

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